A SOVIET WEEKLY OF WORLD AFFAIRS

PALESTINE AND PALESTINIANS

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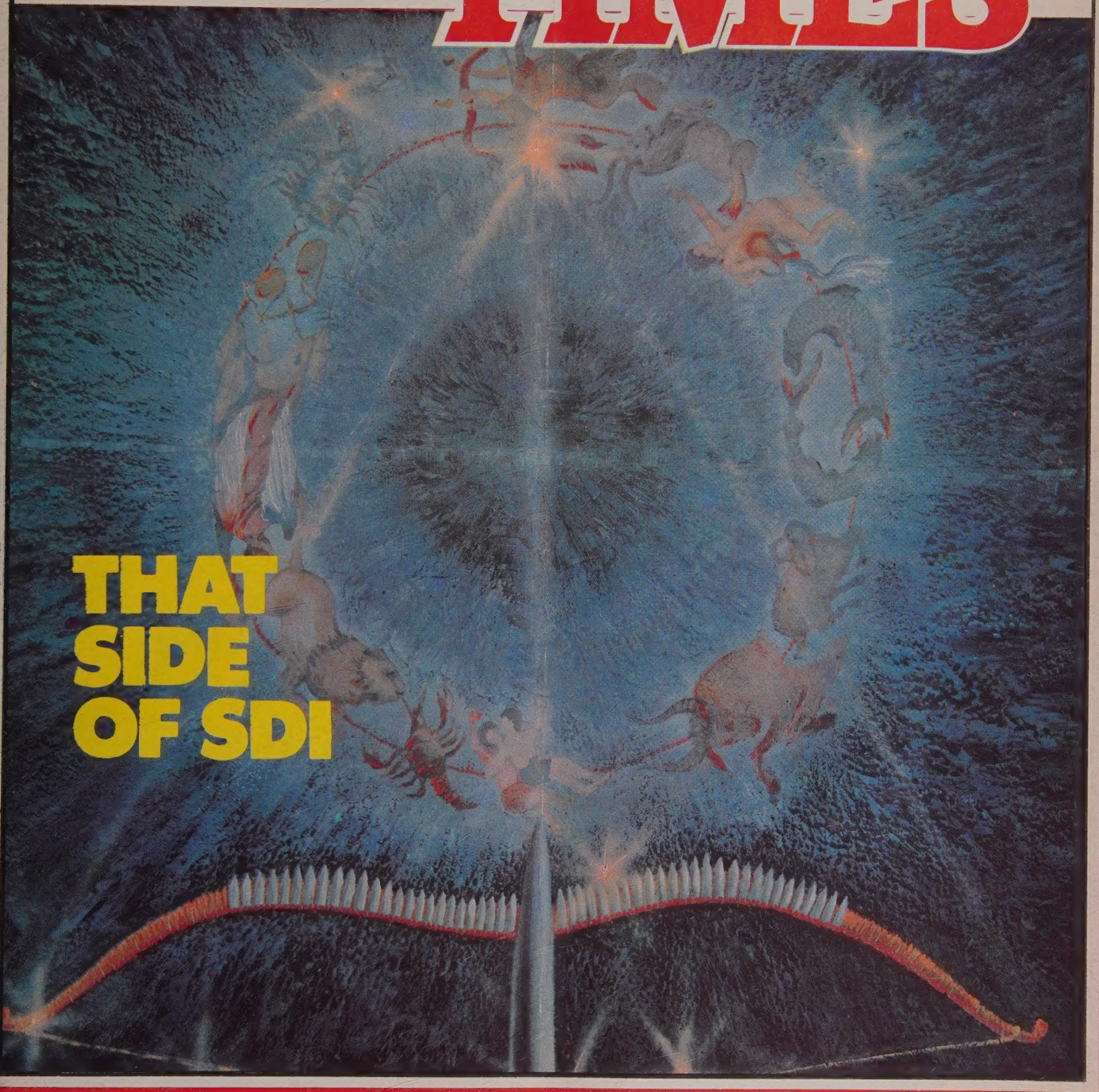


THAT SIDE OF SDI

SOVIET CULTURE FUND: A HERITAGE TO BE PRESERVED, STUDIED AND AUGMENTED

Cutting the first furrow.

1917–1987

TIME AND PEOPLE

"I, Kozinets Nikolai Fyodorovich, have taken responsibility for 25,450 hectares of land and one birch tree on it," says a document certifying the establishment of state farm No. 5 in the Kokchetav Ragion of Kazakhstan.

Many virgin-land state farms had similar beginnings.

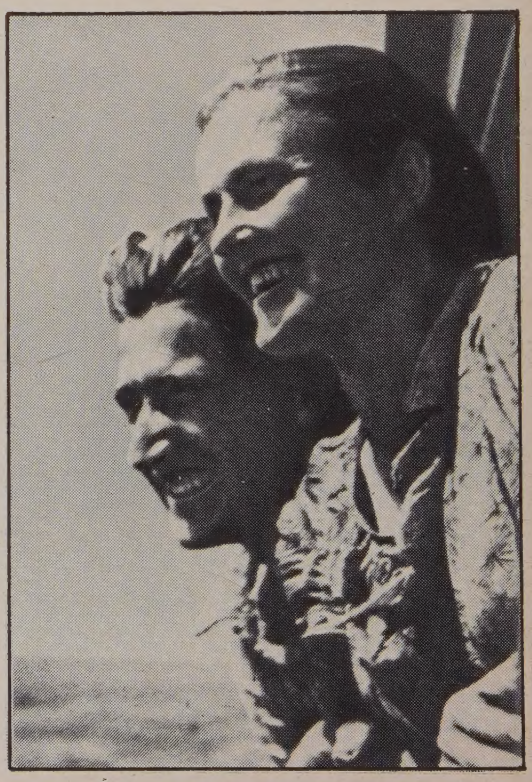
Shortage of grain was an acute problem in the early 1950s. A radical change was necessary, but it was not possible in a short time on long-cultivated land. With its limited resources at the time, the country was unable to provide the necessary fertilizers and to raise farming efficiency.

That is why, early in 1954, the decision was taken to start the development of virgin land. It was the hard way, but it promised a quick return.

The movement to develop virgin lands involved tens of thousands of people. Over half a million young men and girls— members of the Young Communist League— applied for work on virgin land. In two years more than 80,000 people had moved to eastern regions from the Ukraine, and thousands from Byelorussia, the Transcaucasus and the Baltic.

The volunteers were frankly warned that they would have a hard life there. But reality proved even more severe. Tractors and hundreds of motor-vehicle trains made their way to the still nonexistent state farms in areas with bad roads or none, in spite of wind and snow storms. At first, people lived in tents, dugouts and huts.

Errors and miscalculations were made in this gigantic undertaking. But, overall, the development of the virgin lands was worth the expense and effort. In a short time a large new grain-producing region had appeared in the Soviet Union.



Seeing young people off to the virgin land.

A SOVIET WEEKLY
OF WORLD AFFAIRS

NEW TIMES

48

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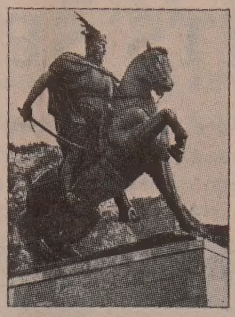
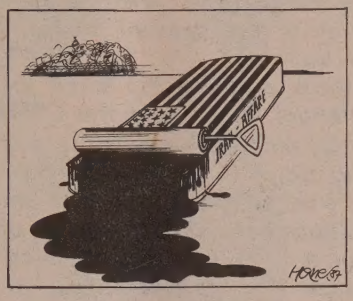


The monument to Skanderbeg, the Albanian national hero, in Tirana.



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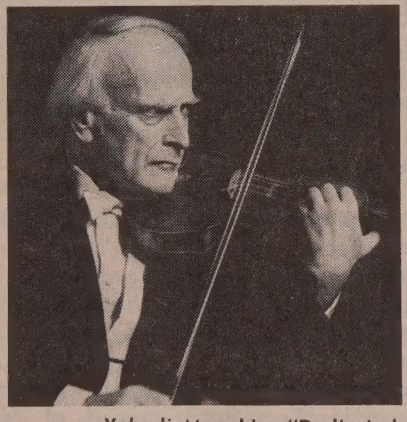
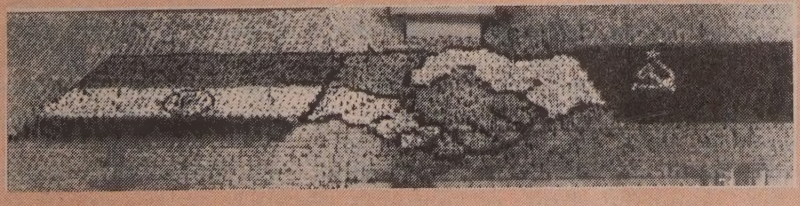


Yehudi Menuhin: "Dedicated to the memory of David Oistrakh."



3 **The U.S.S.R. Festival in India has shown that the official relations between our two states are becoming increasingly human.**

NEW TIMES

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FROM OUR MAILBAG

I am neither pro-American, nor pro-Moscow. Nevertheless, I am certain that the world cannot today do without understanding between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. I hope the forthcoming Soviet-U.S. summit will make the future safer for all of us.

TAKAO SHIMAI
Nagoya, Japan

I have mixed feeling about the Soviet-U.S. summit. On the one hand, one cannot but welcome any lightening of the nuclear burden, however small. On the other, I have my misgivings about a country where anti-Soviet forces command a tremendous influence. Won't they have a decisive effect on the climate of the talks? Already now the Western radio stations that broadcast into the U.S.S.R. are stepping up their frivolous attacks on us and churning out all sorts of cock-and-bull stories about our perestroika. They even go to the length of attacking our leader. All this cannot but give grounds for concern.

A. BIRYUKOV,
Leningrad, U.S.S.R.

The forthcoming destruction of a whole class of Soviet and American missiles is now a major talking point with all my friends. But come to think of it: you are to scrap almost three times more weapons than the U.S. will - and still the latter is making various reservations and saying you are likely to deceive it (by stowing two or three missiles away somewhere). As for its own missiles, the U.S. wants to dismantle rather than scrap them, and to keep their warheads and motors. Aren't you in too much of a hurry to sign that treaty?

MIKIS STOMATIS,
Piraeus, Greece

EDITORIAL

PERESTROIKA INTO ITS SECOND STAGE

"We are faced with two interconnected and interdependent objectives which constitute the core of the second stage of perestroika - the further democratization of society and radical economic reform," Mikhail Gorbachev told a recent conference at the CPSU Central Committee devoted to problems of Party work. "These are the key objectives of the present stage of perestroika."

The thirty-odd months since the April plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee have witnessed a turning point in Soviet life. With our sights set on radical changes, we have elaborated the concept of perestroika and a practical programme for implementing it.

The nation has got down to putting an end to the stagnation and conservatism inherited from the previous period, and correcting the mistakes made then. The air has become clearer, and the processes of promoting democracy and glasnost have been initiated. We have devised a scheme for carrying out economic reform and put it through experimental tests; the Law on State Enterprise (Amalgamation) has been adopted; self-support, self-financing and individual business activity have become commonplace.

The country is now entering the period of putting the concept of perestroika into practice.

This means drawing millions of people into the implementation of the changes planned, and promoting and deepening democracy.

It is democracy alone that can guarantee the success of our economic and political reforms. The previous reforms fizzled out for the very reason that they were not backed by sweeping political changes and the democratization of society. We have learned this lesson well.

The current reform is to put an end to the injunctive system of management. It stresses the open and frank discussion of outstanding economic problems, the appointment of factory managers by election and worker participation in running production.

Having proclaimed the slogan of democratization, the CPSU - the country's ruling party - is taking the lead in following it.

The period of perestroika makes it incumbent on the Party to change not only the style of its work, but also the functions of its local organizations and committees. Instead of replacing economic managers and dealing directly with all problems, as was formerly the case, the Party will from now on direct, coordinate and pool people's efforts and stir them to more vigorous activity.

The democratization of the Party is also evident today in the renunciation of formalism, peremptoriness, arrogance and political phrase-mongering, of all that led to the discrepancy between words and deeds. From this viewpoint it is necessary to be on the lookout for any manifestations of either conservatism or pseudo-vangardism.

The conference at the CPSU Central Committee pointed out in no uncertain terms that the practice of ordering people about, bringing pressure to bear on them and restraining their initiative is hopelessly outdated. A resolute end must be put to the lethargy of the past.

New developments in our life call for new, non-dogmatic and truly creative solutions and approaches. The Party is to take a new look at its role as the political vanguard of society. The Party cadres will be judged by their attitude to perestroika.

Whether we carry our plans through depends on the extent to which the people is enlisted in management. The key to success lies in glasnost and democracy.

THE FESTIVAL: LEARNING MORE ABOUT EACH OTHER

New Times special correspondents LEONID ABRAMOV and LEONID ZHEGALOV filed this report from Delhi

In 1921, Krishna Rao, a journalist and foreign news editor for an official newspaper in the town of Guntur, prepared and published a book called "Nicolai Lenin: His life and work." He did so at his own peril, dodging his British censors.

This was probably the first English-language biography of the leader of the Russian revolution. For all its inevitable inaccuracies, it had an electrifying effect on patriotic Indians opposing British colonial rule. The colonial authorities impounded and destroyed virtually every copy. Recently Soviet scholars and their Indian colleagues managed to track down a copy of the book. It was owned by the son of the late author. He handed over the unique item of international Leniniana to the Central Museum of the Revolution in Moscow. The book has recently crossed the Himalayas again for exhibition being held as part of the U.S.S.R. Festival in India which opened on November 21.

It is arguable whether this story has more to do with the mutual attraction felt by the two great peoples or with the impact of the Russian revolution on the national liberation movement in India. In either case, it testifies to the common historical destinies of our two countries, which are so different and yet, at the same time, united, because they represent the two major trends of our time: the struggle of the peoples for their national liberation and the struggle for the social renewal of the world. Jawaharlal Nehru said back in 1936 that if there was hope for the future it would be a consequence of what was happening in Soviet Russia, as the new civilization being created there would spread to other lands and put an end to the wars and conflicts on which capitalism thrives.

Monument to Lenin in Nehru Park

From now on a monument to Lenin will be reflected in the waters of the pond in the Jawaharlal Nehru Park in the centre of the Indian capital. The monument was unveiled by the Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and Soviet Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov, in India on an official visit timed for the beginning of the U.S.S.R. Festival in India, which is to last about a year. Five months earlier, a monument to Indira Gandhi, the great Indian leader and stateswoman, was unveiled in Moscow at the start of the Indian Festival in the Soviet Union. The scenario of the first day of the Soviet Festival in Delhi was a carbon copy of the Moscow programme.

Rajiv Gandhi welcoming Nikolai Ryzhkov at the Palam Airport, Delhi. TASS photo

This is no mere whim of the Indian and Soviet sponsors. Both festivals mark the important dates in the history of our countries - the 70th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution and the fortieth anniversary of Indian independence. The Indian Festival opened in the Kremlin and the Soviet Festival in the Indian capital's main square, near the presidential palace. Just as the Indian festival in the U.S.S.R. really got under way in the Lenin Stadium in Moscow, so the Soviet Festival in Delhi was celebrated in the evening at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium. A crowd of 100,000 watched the proceedings. A thousand times as many watched it on television, as the spectacle was broadcast live to the Soviet Union. Part of the eastern terraces and the football pitch were turned into fantastic time machine, in itself an impressive mass spectacle. Several hundred Soviet performers in the field and 7,500 Indian school children specially trained for the occasion formed themselves into constantly changing patterns, presenting pictures of the highlights of the 70-year history of the Soviet state. The audience felt the pulse of Soviet life today in a performance by Soviet actors. For the first time in its 200-year history, the Bolshoi Theatre company performed in the open air.

ITALY

46th government crisis

●A NEW GOVERNMENT CRISIS, THE 46TH IN THE HISTORY OF THE REPUBLIC, HAS ONCE AGAIN REVEALED THE CHRONIC INSTABILITY OF ITALIAN RULING CIRCLES.

On November 14, immediately after the Liberals had slammed the door of the Palazzo Chigi, the head of the five-party cabinet, Giovanni Goria, resigned, but on November 18 he informed the President that mutual understanding in the cabinet had been restored, and the government, composed of the same ministers, returned to parliament to seek a vote of confidence. Was there any need for all the fuss?

The Liberal Party, which enjoys the support of only 2 per cent of the electorate, compelled the four other parties - Christian Democrats, Socialists, Republicans and Social Democrats, who jointly poll about 60 per cent of the vote, to make concessions and satisfy its demands - both its own demands and those of the small group of rich people whom the Liberals represent. But not the demands of the broad masses. Such is the paradox of capitalist democracy.

The Liberals objected to several provisions in the financial bill for 1988 and, under the pretext of easing the tax burden of the population, urged cuts in government spending on health care, education and aid to earthquake victims. A compromise was quickly found in order to preserve the cabinet and close the ranks of the opposition.

The Communists and other opposition parties, as well as three major trade union centres - the General Union of Italian Workers, the Confederation of Italian Trade Unions and the Italian Labour Union, which have between them a total membership of ten million workers, declared to the government before the crisis that the financial bill was unacceptable to the working people. But the government did not heed this warning. Nor did the general strike on November 25 achieve its aim. The cabinet remained amazingly united in spite of mass demands for more

Man to man

Like the Indian festival, the Soviet festival had much more to offer than a colourful opening ceremony. The unique feature of the event is its mass character. Over the next year or so dozens of Indian cities will host Soviet actors, exhibit rare collections from Soviet museums and picture galleries, and see mass rallies of young people from the two countries. The Soviet decision to allow some valuable exhibits from Soviet collections and museums to be taken out of the country for the first time has been greatly appreciated here. It is the first time ever that India will have seen so many people from the two great countries mixing together.

Relations between India and the Soviet Union, elevated to a new level as a result of Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to India a year ago, are becoming increasingly democratic both in content and character. No longer confined to contacts between government institutions, they are increasingly becoming people-to-people relations.

Everything has been done to provide the conditions for the Soviet Festival, and this despite the fact that some parts of the country have been hit by drought and others by floods during the period of the festival. Some opposition conservative parties used this to try to induce the Rajiv Gandhi government to abandon the festival. This makes the efforts made by the public and the government to allow the festival to go ahead particularly valuable. The Soviet co-sponsors, for their part, made some cuts in their programme, which, both sides feel, will not diminish the impact of the year-long festivities.

This is evidenced by the banner headlines in the newspapers reporting the opening ceremony the following day. "Russia in India Now," "Soviets Conquer Hearts of Indians," "Glasnost is Here."

The supreme value

Nikolai Ryzhkov's visit to India had a business as well as a ceremonial aspect to it. He held talks with Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and other Indian leaders. The two sides discussed the present state of relations between the two countries and prospects for their development in the light of the impulse given to Soviet-Indian cooperation by Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to Delhi last year. Several important agreements on economic cooperation, trade, higher educational exchanges and tourism were signed.

The Soviet Union and India have long cooperated fruitfully in international affairs because, as local political circles note, the two countries have similar strategic interests based on their joint struggle for a more rational world. That is why, during their exchange of views on international issues, the two heads of government noted their mutual understanding of the need for further joint efforts towards eliminating nuclear and all other types of weapon of mass destruction before this century is out.

This mutual understanding stems from the Delhi Declaration signed a year ago by Mikhail Gorbachev and Rajiv Gandhi. The document introduces a qualitatively new approach to the fundamental problems of relations between states. The Delhi Declaration blended the values of the world's first socialist country and the recognized leader of the non-aligned movement. It is felt in both Delhi and Moscow that the Delhi Declaration - that political code of the late 20th century - must become an imperative in international politics as it puts the value of human life above all other notions, stemming as it does from the realities of the modern world, which is at once still extremely contradictory, and more interdependent than ever.

This goal will be served by the fresh manifestation of unity between our two peoples, who are coming to know each other better in the course of the festivals.

After the pageantry and the fireworks against the black velvety Delhi sky, the Soviet Festival's programmes will travel to many other Indian cities. A minor but festive occasion was the awarding of the New Times Quiz prize on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution. The prize was won by a student from Calcutta. In Delhi, New Times readers met to congratulate the winner of the New Times photo competition. Afterwards there was a frank two-hour discussion that focussed on the changes taking place in the Soviet Union, and the role of journalism in the modern world. ■

jobs and a revision of the tax system. It preserved unity in spite of the acute problems of the South, where 20 per cent of able-bodied people have no work. It stood firm in spite of the protests of 13 million pensioners, who held a national demonstration in Rome at the time of the government crisis.

The government, which represents the interests of the 10 per cent of the population that owns half the nation's wealth, proved incapable of making an effort to solve at least the more acute of the country's social and economic problems.

In the prevailing economic "boom," the profits of the wealthier strata of the population are rising. The treasury does not benefit from all sources of income. The state debt exceeds 100,000 billion lire, whereas big incomes elude taxation. It is not easy, and sometimes politically unadvisable, to expose the "prominent" tax-dodgers. It is safer to revise the social items of the budget and suppress mass indignation by adopting a law on strikes. The draft of such a law has already been worked out, and it is the Republicans who are insisting on approving it.

The government crisis is over, but for how long? Besides the economic problems, aggravated by the crash on the world stock markets, Goria's reanimated cabinet will soon be faced with political problems too.

The recent five referenda on legal issues and on the future of the nuclear power industry consolidated the positions of some parties and weakened those of others. The Communists and Socialists scored points while the Christian Democrats and Republicans lost some ground. In practice, however, each party continues to stick to its guns.

There is no national unity on the question of drafting a new law on the civil responsibility of judges or on that of defining the directions of nuclear power development. The Christian Democrats, Socialists, Republicans, Social Democrats and Liberals, who form the government, are also divided on these questions. It is doubtful whether this discord on so many complex and delicate issues can make for stability within the cabinet in the future.

PAVEL NEGOITSA
Trud and New Times correspondent

Rome

SOUTH AFRICA — ANGOLA

A flagrant aggression

● SOME 30,000 TROOPS, 435 TANKS, 80 WARPLANES AND 400 GUNS WERE CONCENTRATED BY THE PRETORIA REGIME IN ORDER TO OCCUPY THE SOUTH OF ANGOLA.

Zambia and other frontline states are disquieted over Pretoria's aggressive intentions. Since 1975, when Angola became independent, South African troops have repeatedly raided the country, ostensibly with the aim of smashing the Namibian refugee camps.

Following the troops, South African President Botha made a visit to the occupied southern part of Angola at the invitation of UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi.

The aggression has caused severe damage to Angolan agriculture, with farm output dwindling by 80 per cent. Diamond production, once the principal source of hard currency, has almost ceased. Luanda is compelled to spend half of the country's budget on defence to repel attacks by UNITA and South African troops. Half its external debt of about three billion dollars is the result of military expenditure.

The shortage of foodstuffs is particularly acute on the fertile central plateau, where the fighting is most fierce. According to official statistics, between 20 and 30 per cent of Angolan children are undernourished. In the past four years, the international Red Cross and the United Nations have intermittently airlifted food supplies. But they are hardly sufficient for half a million people.

The aggression has had tragic consequences. Over half a million children have been killed in southern Africa as a result of hostilities conducted by the racists against the lawful governments of Angola, Mozambique, Zambia, Zimbabwe and other frontline states. At a press conference in Lusaka on November 18, a U.N. representative in Zambia revealed that 140,000 children perished in Angola and Mozambique during the past year.

Current chairman of the Organization of African Unity and leader of the frontline states, Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda vigorously condemned the latest act of aggression against Angola and urged the West to introduce comprehensive and mandatory economic sanctions against the racist state. The President stressed the determination of the frontline states and the whole of free Africa to continue to give aid to the Angolan people in defending their sovereignty and to the Namibian people in their fight for the independence of their homeland.

The leaders of the frontline states of Angola, Botswana, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Tanzania and Mozambique and the president of SWAPO, held an urgent meeting in Luanda on November 15 to determine the scale of the latest invasion and review the situation in the region. A statement issued after the meeting says that as a result of the racist actions the situation in the region has been dangerously aggravated. The military operations in Angola, the leaders said, are an act of aggression not only against that country but against all the frontline states.

The visit of President Botha, at Jonas Savimbi's invitation, to the areas of fierce fighting testifies to South Africa's increasing interference in the affairs of a sovereign state and is regarded here as an open declaration of war on Angola by the racist regime.

Botha's provocative visit also proves that the fighting in Angola is not a civil war between the People's Army and UNITA but a struggle against the aggressors and the rebel groups under their control.

Summing up the results of the Luanda meeting, Kenneth Kaunda said that the participants had unanimously condemned the United States for its inflexible stand on the Namibian problem and for linking

South African troops on the Angolan territory again.

the decolonization of Namibia with the presence of Cuban troops in Angola. The leaders of the frontline states, he declared, fully supported Security Councijl resolution 601, which proposes radical measures for a Namibian settlement.

NIKOLAI RESHETNYAK
Lusaka

FALKLAND (MALVINAS) ISLANDS

Conflict still on

●A GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION, ADOPTED BY 114 VOTES, CALLS ON BRITAIN AND ARGENTINA TO START NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE AIM OF A PEACEFUL AND FINAL SETTLEMENT OF PROBLEMS BETWEEN THEM, INCLUDING THE FUTURE OF THE FALKLAND (MALVINAS) ISLANDS. THE BRITISH DELEGATE VOTED AGAINST THE RESOLUTION.

The issue of the archipelago is raised at General Assembly sessions from year to year, and each time the international forum returns to the events in the South Atlantic in April and May 1982, when Argentine troops landed on the Falklands.

It will be recalled that the islands, lying some 400 miles from the Argentine coast, were captured by Britain in 1833. Argentina has never recognized this annexation as legal. The war of 1982 ended in defeat for Argentina, but the political conflict underlying it goes on.

In the course of the most recent discussion of the problem it again became clear that Buenos Aires is ready to begin negotiations with London at any time and without any preconditions. At the same time, it became evident once more that Britain is to blame for the failure of negotiations to start, as it will not heed the appeals of the international community. Sir Crispin Tickell, Britain's permanent representative at the United Nations, insisted that the two countries put aside the question of sovereignty over the islands and only discuss questions of improving relations between them. The point is, however, that the question of sovereignty is central to the solution of the conflict.

London is deliberately complicating the protracted conflict. A recent example of this policy was the unilateral decision of the Thatcher cabinet to introduce, as from February 1, 1987, a 200-mile economic zone around the occupied Falkland (Malvinas) Islands. In this way Britain assumed an exclusive right to fish in the region and issue licences for any economic activity there. It was stated that Britain reserves the right to use armed force to protect the inviolability of the zone's borders.

The need to take full advantage of the expanded international fishing in the South Atlantic was advanced as a formal excuse for establishing an economic zone. In fact, the prospective income from the sale of licences was estimated at nine million dollars a year, whereas the expenditure on patrol duties in the zone will reach six million dollars.

Why, then, is London clinging to the almost desert archipelago in the South Atlantic? This is exlained in the first place by the desire of Washington and London to turn the region into a militarized zone. The Thatcher cabinet has already sent dozens of warplanes and helicopters to the archipelago and built missile launching pads and an airfield capable of receiving modern combat aircraft.

There have been reports of Britain's intention to deploy nuclear weapons in the Falkland Islands and, in the longer term, to build, jointly with the United States, South Africa and Chile, a sort of branch of NATO in the South Atlantic. This is being done contrary to Brazil's peace initiative to declare the South Atlantic a zone of peace and cooperation. The proposal was submitted to the U.N. on behalf of 11 Latin American and African states, and approved.

But clearly, that is not the whole story. London's reluctance to negotiate with Buenos Aires seems to be explained by the dissatisfaction of the Tory government and its Washington friends with the foreign-policy course of Argentine President Raul Alfonsin. It looks as if they want to punish him for his active part in the non-aligned movement and the Group of Six, which is calling for nuclear disarmament, for his public statements against rendering military aid to the Nicaraguan contras, and for what is definitely "criminal" in the eyes of Margaret Thatcher and the U.S. administration - his visits to the Soviet Union and Cuba, and the political, economic and cultural cooperation agreements he signed in the course of them.

ALEXANDER BARYSHEV

HUMAN RIGHTS

Life under surveil-lance

● THE SCANDALOUS FACT OF ARMY INTELLIGENCE AGENTS LISTENING IN TO NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN MEMBERS OF THE EUROPARLIAMENT HAS BECOME PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE IN BELGIUM.

The gist of the matter is as follows. The Rainbow - a group of members of the Europarliament representing the Green parties - met in Brussels on February 7, 1987, to discuss problems of peace, the arms race and the international arms trade.

Naturally, no Belgian army intelligence agents were invited although evidently they were curious about the meeting. In order to satisfy their curiosity, they parked a minibus packed with electronic gear next to the building in which the MEPs had gathered.

The uninvited guests were given away by a cine-camera spotted by a participant in the meeting. The Greens found out who the minibus belonged to, and Johan Pepermans, a member of the national parliament from the Agalev (Flemish Green) Party, demanded explanations from the Ministry of Defence. Cornered, the top brass had to admit that the minibus belonged to the army intelligence service, but, on grounds of official secrecy, withheld information as to what its crew's assignment was.

Following these "explanations," the Belgian authorities considered the incident closed. The Greens, however, did not. They have demanded recently that the leadership of the Europarliament protect their parliamentary immunity. On November 12, Lord Plumb, Chairman of the Europarliament, voiced "grave concern" over the violation of their rights and insisted that the Belgian government observe them strictly.

The Belgian Defence Ministry responded with a statement to the effect that army intelligence agents had been on a routine assignment, i.e., that they had been keeping an eye not on members of the Europarliament but on persons "close to military quarters." Wilfried Telkämper, one of the Rainbow group's leaders, objected that no Belgian servicemen had taken part in the meeting. On behalf of the Green faction in the Europarliament, he deman-

ded that Brussels be more explicit about what had happened.

The story reached the Belgian public via the Morgen, a popular Flemish paper which had attracted the authorities' special attention: police had made an early-morning raid on its offices at the end of February. Before anyone was in, the raiders forced the door and rummaged through the journalists' desks and files. Caught in the act by newsmen reporting for work, the policemen explained that they were looking for the sources of the information on the basis of which the Morgen had exposed a financial scandal involving the sponsors of an international sports tournament.

Paul Goossens, the newspaper's editor-in-chief, refused to let the police inspect his personal safe, whereupon he was handcuffed, taken into custody, and released only after being subjected to a ninety-minute interrogation. There were other excesses, too. The cameraman who photographed the search had his film confiscated.

Having found nothing of interest to them in the editorial offices, the agents of the law went through 23 journalists' homes with a fine comb, also without "success." Paul Goossens explained this massive police raid as an attempt at intimidation. "This is a kind of warning that working for a paper like ours is dangerous, and that passing on information to us is dangerous too."

The Morgen incident stirred up a storm of indignation from the country's political circles and the public. The Professional Belgian Journalists' Association stressed in its statement that the incident was "part of the growing overall pressure being brought to bear on a number of our society's democratic institutions."

The Morgen and the Rainbow are not the only victims of this pressure. Examples of similar unlawful activities abound. Early this year, for instance, lawyers for a reputable Brussels legal company dealing with all sorts of problems, from political to business, discovered that their telephones were being tapped. In the course of the February parliamentary debates, Socialist Senator Serge Moureaux said he had evidence that journalists' telephone conversations were also being listened to. Recently, electronic bugs were found in a Labour Party conference room.

Professionals are hard to catch red-handed, so there is reason to believe that the cases of wire-tapping mentioned above are only the tip of the iceberg.

VYACHESLAV BOIKOV
Brussels

"So much for the enemy image. Let's have the friend image now, I've got a couple of cartridges left."

Cartoon by Vsevolod Arsenyev

"STAR WARS": PROS AND CONS

The discussion on which mankind's future depends

As the Washington summit approaches, the spectre of "star wars" is causing increasing alarm. At the Reykjavik summit it was a stumbling block in the way of reaching historic agreements. Since then both sides have been trying to avoid head-on collisions on this problem.

Even at negotiations diplomats are talking not about the Strategic Defence Initiative as such, but about the Soviet-American ABM Treaty, about observing, preserving and, possibly, strengthening the regime of this treaty, and specifying the limits imposed by it on the deployment of anti-missile defence systems. Nevertheless, the problem of SDI stands behind all this polemic.

Is the "star wars" programme real or mythical, a threat or a bluff? How does it influence the strategic balance, the political climate, and prospects for disarmament? Below are different views on the subject.

LORD CHALFONT
politician
(Britain)

DEFENCE AS A DETERRENT

"Is SDI a programme to save people or is it a means of protecting one's own missiles?"

"Well, it's both really. I think it is an attempt to produce a defence against ballistic missiles which would take the place of a flat retaliation. The idea is that the United States could say to the Soviet Union or the Soviet Union to the United States, if it had strategic defence: 'It is no good firing your missiles, because we can destroy them, or at least 90 per cent of them.'

"I think it is better to do that than to say: 'If you fire your missiles, we will fire ours back.' In other words, this is a form of deterrence by defence rather than deterrence by the threat of annihilation."

"There are differences of opinion about SDI. Some contend it is a technological fantasy, while others insist it is a quite feasible plan. What is your opinion?"

"It is certainly not a technological fantasy. It is technologically very difficult, but already some of the technological problems have been solved. I think they have been solved not only in the United States but also in the Soviet Union."

"The solution of individual problems does not mean that a whole system has already been devised. No machine, especially a complex one, is merely a combination of circuits, bolts and nuts."

"It is, of course, easier to devise all the various components of a system than to devise a complete system. The complete system really needs a high degree of information technology, computerization and especially sophisticated software. This is a very big problem. But it can be solved. Information technology is now so advanced that there is no theoretical difficulty in solving the problem of battle management of a space defence system. And I think both the United States and the Soviet Union have sufficient scientific and technological potential to solve this problem."

"Will not, then, strategic defence become a function of computers? Will not the fate of mankind be placed in the hands of clever and fast-acting machines, much cleverer and faster than poor hidebound homo sapiens?"

"It is a very serious question. We must ensure that, however much the system is computerized, it should always be under the control of man and his decision-making. This is an essential part of the strategic defence system. We must never - I agree with your question - place the fate of mankind in the hands of the automatic response of a computerized system."

"How reasonable is the SDI programme from the economic point of view? The cost of the programme is estimated at a trillion dollars. That is a prodigious sum, especially in view of the needs of mankind."

"There are many things in the world that I would prefer to spend dollars and rubles on than strategic defence. But, you see, we have nuclear weapons, they exist, they cannot be 'disinvented.' If all armed force were removed from the world, then, I think, it might be possible to talk of spending this kind of money on other needs. But as long as nuclear weapons and the threat of nuclear war exist, it seems to be more sensible to spend money on creating a defence against nuclear weapons than to spend billions of dollars or billions of rubles on creating offensive missiles to threaten your potential enemy with."

JEROME WIESNER
scientist
(U.S.A.)

NO PROTECTING THE ENTIRE TERRITORY

"You were a scientific adviser to President Eisenhower. SDI is being called the brainchild of President Reagan. How feasible is this idea from the scientific point of view?"

"SDI means so many things that one has to be very careful while talking about it. It started out as a shield for the people of the United States, the Soviet Union, or any other country, against ballistic missiles. I do not think that is possible. When SDI was proposed, a countermeasure against it - the cruise missile - was already invented. SDI is powerless against cruise missiles."

"If an impenetrable shield is impossible, then what is possible?"

"Many studies in the United States, the Soviet Union and Europe have indicated that it is not possible to completely protect a territory against a ballistic missile attack. It is possible to protect some part of a territory. But that is not enough to make the effort worthwhile."

"President Reagan has often stated that after SDI has become a reality, he will be ready to share its secrets with the Soviet Union. What do you feel about that?"

"It's a problem he will not have to face. During the very long period of development of SDI, the other side will concentrate its efforts on devising ways of overcoming it. And since you don't know what you are defending against, it's very difficult to make that defence effective."

FRANK von HIPPEL
scientist
(U.S.A.)

INSTABILITY IS BOUND TO GROW

"How can SDI influence the arms control process?"

"I think at the moment this programme is causing a diversion from real arms control, from the prospects of arms reduction. I don't think it is a serious possibility to have significant defences against nuclear missiles. And therefore, I think, before too long the SDI programme will begin to fade away. But at the moment it is a serious diversion from the real aims of arms control."

"Let us imagine that the SDI programme is being successfully implemented or even has been implemented. What will happen then? Will strategic defence help the arms reduction process, or will it interfere with it?"

"I think it will make the situation more complicated, more unstable and therefore more dangerous."

"In what respect?"

"There are no leaders today for whom it would not be clear that to use nuclear weapons would mean to commit suicide, to destroy one's own country. With the SDI programme completed, uncertainty would appear. The situation would become more complicated in the long run, whereas it could be simplified by eliminating nuclear weapons instead of continuously developing ever new types of weapons."

NORMAN MAILER
writer
(U.S.A.)

PRESIDENT REAGAN'S PET DREAM

"Some think that big money lies behind SDI."

"I don't think that big money is involved here more than in any other project connected with the military-industrial complex. The Pentagon and big money - there is nothing unusual about that.

"'Star wars' is President Reagan's favourite dream. I feel that our President thinks in terms of scenarios, and 'star wars' is a perfect scenario. Just imagine: the country is safe, under the 'umbrella' of wonderful advanced machines which protect it against an invasion. It's all fantasy."

"Then it must be the most expensive scenario in history."

"It's incredibly expensive. Nothing disturbs me more about my own country than the way we are obliged to consider this scheme seriously."

PIERRE LELLOUCHE
vice-director,
French Institute of International Relations

STILL BENT ON INVULNERABILITY

"SDI is a new factor in world politics. Why are President Reagan and his administration advocating this programme so insistently?"

"I would mention here the old desire of the Americans to be invulnerable. Unlike the Europeans, the Americans have never known war at home. The only thing the Americans are really worried about is missiles coming from the skies. Since the war they have repeatedly tried to make their country invulnerable. At first, they had a monopoly on nuclear weapons and experienced no problems. But then the Soviet Union developed its own atomic weapons, and a situation of power-sharing arose."

"And now they want to regain their former monopoly?"

"Well, they have tried to make their territory invulnerable. If you remember, in the 1950s they built a shield against bombers. However, their efforts proved futile when you devised missiles. Then they tried to build an anti-missile defence. Incidentally, you also tried to do so. Such a course of events led to the conclusion of the ABM Treaty which stabilized the situation."

"And now a new round has started? Let us turn from the motives to possible consequences. Suppose SDI is a feasible project, and the system so much desired by the Americans has been created. What happens next?"

"The strategic consequences depend on who has the system, and where you live. If only one country has the system, it is obviously going to be a destabilizing factor, because it can be used both for defence and attack. If both countries have an 'umbrella,' even an imperfect one, my view is that for a lot of money you will have a little more difficulty in attacking each other."

"Is it worth spending so much money for such small returns?"

"Personally, I think it is not. With the SDI programme becoming operative, the situation will be worse for those countries that depend on the nuclear protection of one of the superpowers, particularly for the West Europeans. This is not the case with France. If the territories of the two great powers are protected against a direct nuclear attack, this will lead to a highly dangerous situation in the centre of Europe, which will not be protected.

"I think SDI is not a good idea, even if the United States and the Soviet Union never build a space defence system."

"The Reykjavik summit offered us the possibility of doing away with missiles. What, then, are the grounds for keeping SDI? Is it not simpler to abolish the missiles?"

"If all ballistic nuclear missiles are scrapped, the rationale behind SDI will be very small. If all nuclear weapons are

destroyed, there will be no justification for SDI. Nevertheless, I disagree with both views.

"The notion that we can get rid of all ballistic missiles was, in my opinion, a negotiating gimmick which the United States used at the Reykjavik summit. The Soviet idea that all nuclear weapons can be abolished is unrealistic, to my mind.

"Personally, I don't believe that ballistic missiles can be destroyed for ever, and I don't think we should strive for a nuclear-free world. It is an unrealistic proposal. Nuclear weapons exist, and they cannot be 'disinvented.' And, most importantly, I don't think it will buy you more stability. I don't think either that a world without nuclear weapons will be safer."

"Why should a world without nuclear weapons be less stable than a world threatened with catastrophe?"

"From the point of view of common sense and ethics, I have absolute sympathy with any idea of ridding the world of all armaments and wars. But we have to take a realistic view. The reality is that since 1945 there has been no war between East and West, though there have been many reasons and many incidents that could have led to war. We have to ask ourselves why there has been no war here and why there have been some 250 wars in the Third World, in areas not covered by nuclear deterrence. The reason is that nuclear war is not winnable. In the nuclear age war is no longer an instrument of policy. How stable will the world be without nuclear weapons? If we leave the world piled with conventional weapons, there will be less stability than we have today."

"But why pile the world with conventional arms for ever? Disarmament has to be brought about in this field, too. How can we talk about stability while on the verge of disaster? It is enough to recall the million Hiroshimas stockpiled in the world. They could blow up at any moment - by mistake or by accident."

"They will not blow up by themselves. Somebody has to do it. There are safety controls on both sides."

"In Chernobyl they also believed in safety controls."

"A nuclear reactor is not operated in the same way as you would use nuclear weapons in a war. For the one million Hiroshimas to be put into action there must arise a situation where political leaders would contemplate the use of such weapons.

"The real danger is not a nuclear catastrophe. Endless wars are being waged in the Third World, because somebody believes in a victory. Take, for instance, the Iran-Iraq war. Somebody thinks he has enough weapons to defeat the enemy. As a result, half a million people have been killed on each side."

"That argument suggests that if Iran and Iraq had nuclear weapons there would be no war in that region."

"No, this is certainly not a justification for the proliferation of nuclear weapons. But let me tell you that as far as we are concerned - Western Europe, the Soviet Union, the United States - we have peace. And this is so, I think, because we have the weapon that forces political leaders to be reasonable."

EGON BAHR prominent figure in the Social Democratic Party (F.R.G.)

A DANGEROUS COMBINATION

"What do you think about the future of SDI? What influence can SDI exert on world politics and the prospects of arms control?"

"I must confess that I'm not an expert on SDI. I'm an expert on security matters. I think it's stupid to go into space without having solved the problems of peace on earth. Therefore, in principle, I'm against the militarization of space.

"I cannot predict the real outcome simply because I don't know what it will be. It could well be that the whole SDI programme will be more or less dead after the present president leaves his office. Nothing is predetermined, and the possibility cannot be excluded that we are talking about something that will never happen.

"However, if it happens, in other words, if the next president continues the SDI programme, then we shall be faced with very serious problems concerning stability. I think a mixture of offensive and so-called defensive weapons will be very dangerous, especially as nobody knows whether the "defence" initiative will remain purely defensive. Nobody can guarantee that weapons of these types cannot be used for offensive purposes.

"For all these reasons I am in principle against SDI. But this is of no real importance, as it is the Americans who have to decide."

BERNARD LOWN cardiologist, co-president, International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War

PIE IN THE SKY AND WOES ON EARTH

"You doctors have called nuclear war 'the ultimate epidemic.' President Reagan says he has a remedy for this desease - Strategic Defence Initiative. What do you think about this remedy?"

"Well, our conclusion is very simple: SDI is pie in the sky. People have correctly understood this. They do not say: 'the defence initiative.' Americans call it 'star wars.'

"In the world today, every minute a child either dies or becomes a cripple. And this is from causes that can be prevented - from diarrhoea, from infection, from lack of clean water. And every minute the world spends 30,000 dollars on the arms race. We physicians feel it is necessary to divert such a haemorrhage of resources. At the same time we see that urgent global help is not possible today or tomorrow, because 'star wars' is going to consume from one to two trillion dollars.

"We in America feel a deterioration in health care because of the enormous cost of the military effort. We in America are very rich, but not rich enough to have abundance in every walk of life and 'star wars' at the same time."

KARL KAISER director, Institute of International Relations (F.R.G.)

MUTUAL VULNERABILITY INEVITABLE

"What do you feel about the idea of a non-nuclear world? Is it a utopia or a reasonably workable idea?"

"It can only be a long-term goal. The most important objective is to avoid war. First of all, we must think about ways and means of increasing stability in relations between East and West. We must look for political solutions, and as we do so the amount of nuclear weapons must be reduced.

"I'm not, however, in favour of laying all the emphasis on creating a nuclear weapon-free world, because our energies must simultaneously be directed as well towards reducing tension, as it is tension that creates the need for nuclear weapons. Tension is the most important problem for East and West at the moment."

"What effect can SDI have on world stability?"

"First of all, SDI means many things. Originally, it was intended as an impenetrable space shield. In the meantime, it has become clear that this is impossible by virtue of its physical principles and where financial resources are concerned. It can only provide a moderate defence. The Americans have had to admit that in the way the President proposed SDI in March 1983, it is not realistic."

"What do you mean by 'Americans?' President Reagan is still insisting on his programme."

"That's right. But there are also the U.S. Congress, the scientific community, budgetary considerations, and lastly, common sense. If you don't forget about common sense, then you'll conclude that a space shield is not possible."

"Your notion of SDI greatly differs from the official U.S. concept. A programme costing a trillion dollars can hardly be described as moderate defence."

"My supposition is that the United States will not be able, financially, to deploy a system costing a trillion dollars. This is not realistic. What we are talking about may, in the end, be something more moderate - a combination of ground-based ballistic missiles with space-based sensors. Thus, SDI may result in the creation of a moderate strategic defence capable of destroying a certain percentage of missiles."

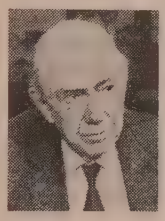
"Something like a shield for American missiles?"

"Yes, if you like. But an imperfect one, because a perfect shield is impossible. There is no way of avoiding mutual vulnerability in this world. Vulnerability will disappear if only nuclear weapons disappear.

"In other words, if strategic defence means that we have a moderate defence and both the Soviet Union and the United States agree to a certain amount of strategic defence combined with deep cuts in offensive armaments, this could lead to stabilization. But it is very important that this should be done by mutual agreement. If an arms race starts in this field, then strategic defence will become a destabilizing factor."

"The Soviet Union strongly disapproves of the concept of SDI and your proposition is therefore rather vulnerable. Don't you think in this connection that SDI could trigger off a new round in the arms race?"

"Since it is not yet clear what we mean by SDI, I would not exclude the possibility that at the close of the negotiating process both sides will end up with a combination of deep cuts in strategic offensive weapons and a moderate amount of strategic defence. After all, the Soviet Union has a moderate amount of strategic defence, which it can increase. The same applies to the United States. But the precondition for stability is that both sides do it in agreement and proceed from the assumption that there is no avoiding mutual vulnerability in this world.Mutual vulnerability has played an important part in keeping both sides restrained."



GRAHAM GREENE
novelist
(Britain)

SDI — ECONOMIC WARFARE

"We know when the atomic age began. When and how will it end?"

"One way is not difficult to foresee - it would be the end of all of us. But I still have belief in the common sense of human beings and even of governments. As for me personally, I have little hope to meet this day but we all may see the end of the danger by the 21st century."

"The SDI is called a 'shield', a 'dome' or an 'umbrella.' Do you see light or shade in this 'umbrella'? What is the reason for the project?"

"I think it's part of the economic warfare waged by the United States. I don't think SDI will ever exist. The Americans hope to wear out the Soviet Union by forcing it to imitate themselves and spend huge sums of money on an impossible project.

"Incidentally, we already have an 'umbrella' - an undeclared nuclear weapon in the form of atomic power stations. Today it is impossible to imagine even a conventional war in Europe, because it would create dozens of Chernobyls. So we simply do not need a military 'umbrella.'"

PETER USTINOV
actor and writer
(Britain)

SAFEGUARD SPACE AGAINST INTRUSION

"When will the atomic age end?"

"For the atomic age to end it has to be superseded by something else, even worse, or else it would be the end of everything. I don't think that can happen, because nuclear weapons as such are not weapons of conquest. They don't correspond with the human desire for other people's territory. Conventional weapons cause much more damage. Unless they are in use, nuclear weapons are an abstraction, like bank guarantees, whereas conventional weapons are like money in our pockets. We understand this and use conventional weapons the whole time in all small conflicts and wars between countries which can't even afford conventional weapons."

"Are not atomic guarantees too dangerous?"

"Yes, they are extremely dangerous. But they are not things likely to be used by people. They are rather weapons of desperation. If a country feels it is losing, it will tend to use the atomic bomb. But under normal circumstances the danger lies in the very existence of these weapons. They can be let off by mistake - by carelessness, by a lack of guarantees of physical nature, by foolishness, by stupidity. The atomic weapon is like a wild animal whose cage may be left open by somebody who suddenly remembers that he has a telephone call to make urgently.

"Of course, atomic weapons have to be controlled, and they have to be eventually eliminated. It is one of those cases when everybody in the world, unless they are mad, want the same thing. The difficulty is to persuade the people concerned in our governments that there is no longer any advantage in the possession of nuclear weapons.

"The wisest thing to be said about atomic weapons came from an American capitalist who was in the military business in the past and was then Carter's ambassador to Moscow - a very civilized man.*"He said to me one day:'When one of our generals tells me that we have the capacity to destroy the world ten times over and, according to his information, the Soviet Union only has the capacity to destroy it between six and seven times, and that therefore we have the advantage, as a businessman I have to say that he is crazy.'

*Thomas Watson

"Speaking of guarantees in this mad world. SDI is sometimes called a guarantee against a madman. Do you consider SDI a safeguard?"

"Today one has to be very careful to listen even to the weakest voice, because the weakest voice might say an intelligent thing. Space should be safeguarded against intrusion, before it is too late. There are not a few objects in space now. But their conduct is mostly peaceful: they help us to see each other on television and do some other useful things. There are also military things about which we do not know anything. But if space also becomes a zone of conflict, my answer to your question about what happens after the nuclear age will be extremely disappointing.

GORE VIDAL
novelist
(U.S.A.)

ONE OF THE BIGGEST JOKES IN YEARS

"The nuclear age began in Hiroshima or a little earlier. When will it end?"

"If one fine day we all blow up, I don't think it can be called a big success, though in a way it will be the triumph of an idea.

"During the second world war I was a soldier in the American army in the Pacific when the bomb was dropped. We thought it was wonderful. There would be no more killing, and the war would end quickly. I did not realize, and nobody realized, the consequences. No one knew what to do with the refuse from atomic machinery - a very strange forgetfulness on the part of the scientists at Los Alamos. Today too we don't know what to do with the waste. Ideally, we should phase out nuclear energy and forget nuclear weapons. They will never be used except by accident, but accidents can happen. I would remove all nuclear weapons and all nuclear reactors. We must break our pact with atomic energy. It is too dangerous. And the sooner we do it, the better. We must get out of this atomic age into which we so stupidly drifted."

"Do you think SDI will help find a way out of the atomic age?"

"'Star wars' is one of the biggest jokes in years. It is absurd to treat it seriously. Scientifically, there is no basis for it at all. It is no more convincing than a comic strip. The United States also now has two trillion dollars in debt. So we can't pay for SDI. I wouldn't worry about that at all. The United States is quite bankrupt. The Soviet Union does not have the resources to make it either.

"You must remember that in the United States defence exists not to have a war with Russia or anybody else but to get money from Congress for the defence industries, like Lockheed, Northrop and so on, and then give the money back to the politicians to be reelected.

"So remember: you are quite safe. The only thing you are not safe from is accident. This is a world of computers, and no computer has ever worked properly. My bank recently sent half a billion dollars into my current account...."

"And did you object?"

"Of course not. But, unfortunately, the computer was wrong. The errors of other computers can be much worse. Computers can even activate a war between the United States and the Soviet Union. The computers of our detection system once took geese coming over from the Canadian border for Soviet missiles, and we could have launched our missiles. So cut back, cut back, cut back."

JOHN GALBRAITH
(U.S.A.)

THE ASHES OF CAPITALISM WON'T BE DISTINGUISHED FROM THE ASHES OF COMMUNISM

"There must be some reason for the persistence with which the Reagan administration is pushing through its SDI programme. Is not this explained in the first place by economic interests"?

"I think there are always some economic interests behind any weapon programme. There are certain interests behind weapon programmes in your country and, of course, in the United States. But I don't agree that the economic interests behind SDI are all that great. There is strong suspicion that it probably won't work. And I venture the thought that maybe the Soviet Union is over-excited about SDI, that it should be rather a problem for us than for the Soviet Union."

"Nevertheless, economic interests seem to be behind it. A trillion dollars is quite a sum, and the expectation of huge profits could turn the heads of many capitalists."

"It is quite a sum. But this does not mean there are no other ways of using it in the United States. It is generally recognized that SDI takes resources away from other spheres. Such resources as capital, engineers and scientists are also badly needed for other purposes. I do not deny the economic interests. But, I think, most likely pressure for SDI comes from people who believe that if some new system of weapons is theoretically possible, it must be developed and that if some military expenditure might be possible they should go ahead with it. I venture to think therefore that the Soviet Union should spend less time worrying about how we waste our money.

"I have often repeated that we must not be so much concerned with the difference betwen capitalism and socialism. We must be more concerned with militarism. We have a situation in which your military establishment is the excuse for our military expenditure, and our military expenditure is the excuse for your military establishment. One might think that there is a certain cooperative relationship between the military establishments of the two great powers. They devour the resources that we both need for civilian purposes, for improving the life of the people."

"Do you feel that SDI is helping intensify militarist tendencies?"

"I wouldn't pick out SDI as an exceptional case. It is part of the military dynamics against which both countries should fight. I want to see the advocates of arms control work together for this common goal. It should be remembered that the most acute ideologist is not going to be able to distinguish the ashes of capitalism from the ashes of communism."

* * *

The "star wars" theme has become a central focus in world politics on which the issues of security, the arms race and disarmament, and the idea of a nuclear-free world converge. The outcome of East-West negotiations depends on what solutions are found. As the worldwide discussion shows, solutions can be found if wisdom and foresight are displayed.

We shall not elaborate further, but leave readers to draw the necessary conclusions. A few words about the interviews. They were conducted in the summer and autumn of this year in Moscow, London and the United States in the course of shooting a documentary called "Star Wars: Pros and Cons." The film is being made by the Central Studio of Documentaries at the request of the Union of Soviet Societies for Friendship and Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries. Its authors are Izvestia political analyst Alexander Bovin, film director Pyotr Mostovoy, and Alexander Pumpyansky of New Times, who conducted the interviews.

Fall guys on a trampled lawn

Results of the inquiry into the Iran-contras affair: tough words, but "nothing new."

The winners did not show up at the ceremony. And it is doubtful if they were overjoyed by the news of the award. The National Council of Teachers of English was giving its annual prizes to examples of official doublespeak prose. This year's top prizes were unanimously awarded to Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North and his former boss, Rear Admiral John Poindexter - the masterminds of the secret Iran-contras operation, for their weasel words at the Congressional hearings on the affair.

The results of the Irangate study have been put together in a report published on November 18, almost a year after Attorney General Edwin Meese, speaking at a White House press conference, shocked Washington and the whole of America with a sensational revelation that some of the proceeds from the sale of arms to Iran had been secretly transferred to the contras via Swiss banks.

The committees' 690-page final report on the secret operations of the White House offers no new facts. The picture remains as confused as ever. The report admits in the very first pages that the "committees cannot even be sure whether they heard the whole truth,or whether (the late CIA director) William Casey's 'Fall Guy' plan was carried out at the public hearings," the "fall guys" being North and Poindexter.

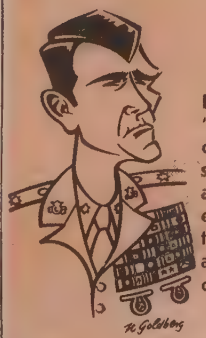
The report was signed by 15 Democrats and three Republicans.

As many local observers note, its conclusions were harsher on the administration and the President than expected. "The common ingredients of Iran and contra policies were secrecy, deception and disdain for the law," says the document. "The lies, omissions, shredding, attempts to rewrite history, all continued even after the President authorized the Attorney General to find out the facts."

Administration officials, the report stresses, committed a transgression far more basic than the violation of the Boland Amendment which banned military aid to the contras. "The concept of an off-the-shelf company to conduct operations with the funds not appropriated by Congress is contradictory to the Constitution... The Committees find that the scheme...violated cardinal principles of the Constitution."

A group of Republicans - six members of the House Committee appointed to look into Irangate and two senators - came up with their own report called the minority report. This report claims that the administration had done nothing wrong and that even if something did happen, Congress is to blame. Attempts to whitewash the White House drew smirks from serious observers in Washington.

Yet even the main report presented by the special committees leaves too many questions unanswered. It says that there is no direct evidence that the President knew personally about the secret transfer of part of the money from the sale of arms to Iran to the contras. North and his associates had managed to destroy too many documents. But, according to Lee Hamilton, chairman of the special house committee, John Poindexter, the President's national security adviser who knew everything about it and daily briefed Reagan on current political developments, had not said a word about the "black channel" for funding the contras. What role did Vice President Bush's men play in the secret network for supplying the contras? Former CIA agent Rodriguez, who coordinated the flights of the planes delivering cargoes to the contras, was assigned to this mission with the knowledge and participation of CIA staff. Rodriguez, however, claimed that the Vice-President knew nothing of the operation. Why, then, did Bush's official calendar presented during the hearings include a meeting with Rodriguez to discuss aid to the contras?



Lt.-Col. Oliver North: "Thank God, under our democratic system Congress and the people are entitled to be denied the right to know anything about covert operations."

Drawing from the People's Daily World

There are other questions to be answered. How did it happen that not all the money earmarked for the contras reached its destination, and 8 million dollars was deposited in a Swiss bank? From the early stages in the scandal suggestions - and there were many - were made that the real aim of the secret operation was to create a big fund to finance large-scale subversive activities without the knowledge of Congress. During the hearings North said that former CIA director Casey wanted to set up a secret unit that would not be accountable to Congress, and that arms shipments to Iran would provide the necessary money for it. Even the representatives of the ruling party indirectly admit such a possibility. Perhaps this money was intended to finance political campaigns inside the United States? This was pointed out by Dante Fascell, House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman.

What is the main reason for the failure of the Congressional committees to answer all these questions? The shortest answer was provided by the New York Times, which headlined one of its articles "Iran-contra panels find fault, but not in the system." This explains the superficial nature of the recommendations offered by the report. In some of these areas the administration has already launched preemptive strikes. It is not for nothing that The New York Times believes the committee's report is "likely to be forgotten in the stacks of libraries."

Washington **IGOR IGNATIEV**

The Indians and the revolution

From our own correspondent
VLADIMIR DOLGOV

Nicaragua's National Assembly has adopted a law granting autonomy to the area lying along the Atlantic seaboard. Prior to this, Zelaya, Nicaragua's biggest department, was divided into two zones. Now these zones have been named Atlantico Norte (North Atlantic) and Atlantico Sur (South Atlantic) and their administrative centres are Puerto Cabezas and Bluefields respectively.

While not solving all the problems of the Atlantic coast, the new law is intended to ease tension in relations between the population of the region and the central parts of the country. Now national minorities in Nicaragua have a genuine possibility of building their society on a democratic basis, and preserving and developing their traditions, culture and language.

In the hinterland

The road from Managua to Bluefields crosses a mountain range and runs along the winding river Escondido. We did not have any adventures on reaching Rama, a river port and an important point on the military highway linking the capital with the Atlantic littoral. We sped down the River Escondido in a motorboat. When the sun set and pitch darkness set in, there was a sudden tropical downpour. In the darkness we saw bright lights whizzing past us. These were tracer bullets fired at our boat by contras who were trying to ambush us. Luckily no one was hit. But several days later the bandits made a dawn attack on a passenger boat plying between Bluefields and Rama, damaged it and badly wounded several passengers.

Bluefields is unlike cities in the western part of Nicaragua, where much remains from Spanish times. Most of the buildings here are of wood. Powerful black-skinned people engage in lively discussions in a dialect of English. There are many soldiers.

The Atlantic coast accounts for 56 per cent of Nicaragua's territory but only 9.5 per cent of its population. The local ethnic groups live in communities - Mestizos, Creoles, Miskitos, Sumos, Ramas, Garifonas, each having their own language, culture, customs and traditions.

Many of Zelaya's unsolved problems are rooted in the distant past. Historically, this vast territory has been isolated from the social, economic and political development of the country's Pacific coast, with its dry climate and fertile volcanic soils, which the Spaniards were quicker to develop. As for the Atlantic region, with its very hot and humid climate, it was difficult of access because of marshes and tropical forests, and for a long time it was under the rule of the British, who appeared there in the 17th century. It was the British who left behind such settlements as Bluefields populated by people of African and Caribbean origin.

Mestizos form the majority of the population in Zelaya. During Nicaragua's struggle for independence, they were pushed out of the Chinandega area and settled, like the Creoles, in Bluefields, near Perlas Lagoon, where they took up farming. Legend says that the Miskitos got their name from their leader Miskut. They settled not only on the territory of what is today Nicaragua but also in neighbouring Honduras. The bulk of Nicaragua's nearly 70,000 Miskitos settled on the River Coco. The Ramas are the smallest Indian tribe - there are about 700 of them. The Garifonas are slightly more numerous - 1,500.

When, in 1860, the British recognized Nicaragua's right to the Atlantic coast, American companies rushed there. And they were all-powerful there right up to the victory of the Sandinist revolution, ruthlessly exploiting the native population and natural resources.

Hugo Sujo Wilson, a historian, told me the story of this vast area: "The then president of Nicaragua, Zelaya, made the Americans 'gifts' of large tracts of land. He was bent on destroying the local languages, banned the teaching of English and closed many schools. Officials sent to this area treated the local population like slaves. As a result local people naturally mistrusted anybody from the Pacific coast. This also explains why the struggle against Somoza bypassed the Atlantic coast. Frankly speaking, the local people viewed the Sandinist victory simply as a replacement of one 'Spanish' government by another. With rare exceptions, they did not take part in the national liberation movement.

"Nevertheless, gradually the people on the Atlantic coast began to support the dismantling of the old government apparatus, the withdrawl of foreign companies and the Sandinist programme of reform. Schools and hospitals began to be built in Zelaya, land reform began to be implemented and efforts were made to stamp out illiteracy."

Mistakes that could have been avoided

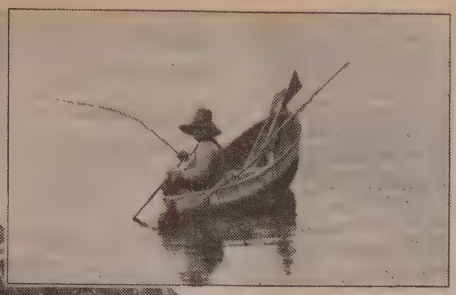
But the Sandinists did not always give due account to local characteristics, traditions, and the way of life and structure of Indian communities. This resulted in costly mistakes. With the aim of strengthening the revolution on the Atlantic coast, they often mechanically applied the methods and forms of their work in other regions. Hugo Sujo Wilson wrote that the central authorities, for instance, tried to set up SNLF committees for defence of the revolution by decree, without doing sufficient preliminary explanatory work, or taking due account of the population's communal way of life. And this disrupted the customary flow of life.

There were also communal clashes. And in Bluefields the government had to resort to force to restore order in the city.

The Sandinists made a big mistake when they tried to rely on MISURASATA, an organization uniting Miskitos, Sumos and Ramas. It was discovered later that it was under the control of the counterrevolutionary Steadman Fagoth.

MISURASATA fanned nationalistic, separatist sentiments. The situation was further exacerbated in the summer of 1981 when Fagoth was exposed and arrested. The Indian communists did not understand who he really was and came out in his support, demanding his release. After this Fagoth vanished, then resurfaced in Honduras, formed an organization called MISURA and declared war on the revolution. MISURA aligned itself with the counterrevolutionary grouping, the Nicaraguan Democratic Force, which was actually on the American payroll.

The plan of MISURA's Red Christmas operation was uncovered late in 1981. It intended to start an uprising of Miskito communities on the River Coco, seize the northeastern part of Nicaragua, proclaim a provisional government in Puerto Cabezas and declare the secession of the Atlantic coast from Nicaragua. When this plan was foiled thousands of Miskitos responded to Fagoth's call and left for Honduras.



The Zelaya jungle rivers are an important source of food for the Indians.

An Indian hut in a hard-to-reach part of the Atlantic coast.

Photos by G. Nadezhdin

In order somehow to defuse the situation, the Nicaraguan authorities moved the Miskitos from the River Coco to other areas. Modern settlements with schools, stores and first-aid centres were built for them, and for the Sumos and Ramas in Tasba Pri and fertile lands were alloted to them. But the Miskitos did not regard this as an attempt to help them because so much was associated for them with the Coco River.

Later, a similar situation occurred with another leader of MISURASATA - Brooklin Rivera. He fled to Costa Rica. Then two warring groupings of the Indian population rose against the revolutionary authorities.

Rivera tried to provide a theoretical basis for his actions - the concept of a "fourth (Indian) world" drawn up with the help of U.S. advisers. While he played at politics, Indians died in the impenetrable selva, never understanding what they were fighting for. But the four years of senseless war were not in vain for them.

Flexible policy

The Sandinist leadership found in itself the courage to admit the mistakes it made in pursuing its nationalities policy. Member of the national leadership of the Sandinist National Liberation Front, Minister of the Interior Tomas Borge, admitted that the Sandinists were on the brink of losing the Miskitos for the revolution. Yet, he went on, "there was more that united us than divided us." As for differences between the government and the Indians, they originated "because of mutual ignorance and not because of antagonism."

The Sandinists' policy in respect of the national minorities on the Atlantic coast now has the support of most Nicaraguans. It is being pursued in two directions - the granting of autonomy to Indian communities and talks with armed groups on their return to peaceful life. Locals have been appointed government commissars and plans to develop the region's economy have been adjusted with due consideration for local conditions.

In June 1985, the Miskitos were allowed to return to their homes along the Coco. Caravans of Indians left for the Coco despite difficulties with transport and supplies, the mining of roads by the contras, and ambushes. To the surprise of many, the comfortable homes in Tasba Pri were abandoned. Miskitos also began to return en masse from Honduras, although this entailed grave risks for them because of contras terrorism.

From late 1984 the Sandinists conducted talks with the afore-mentioned Brooklin Rivera, who was thought to represent the interests of the communities on the Atlantic coast. Four meetings were held, and ended without results. Then the talks were stopped because Rivera, along with his American military advisers, openly sided with the contras.

Although the dialogue between various groups of Indians and the Sandinists is still going on, talks with some of the armed groups and the cease-fire that has been reached have resulted in the downing of arms by a section of the members of Indian organizations and their siding with the revolution. This has raised hopes that a peaceful settlement of the problems of the Atlantic coast is possible.

A National Commission on Autonomy was formed late in 1984. It was headed by Tomas Borge. By way of consultation with the local population, the commission was to draw up the fundamentals of the legislation on autonomy. When I was in Bluefields the commission's work was only beginning. Johnny Hodgson, a black member of the commission, told me that autonomy was a cherished aim of the peoples on the Atlantic coast, and that the Indians had struggled for it for many years. Now, thanks to the revolutionary government, this dream would come true. The people on the coast are proud to be able to call themselves Nicaraguans and most of us are for a territorially integral Nicaragua, he said.

Members of the commission visited enterprises, villages and communities, explaining the benefits of autonomy. True, there were those who treated the idea of autonomy with distrust.

More than two years passed. Then came an important moment for the people of the Atlantic coast: a general assembly of all ethnic groups was held in Puerto Cabezas on April 22-24. The 210 delegates of communities and numerous guests approved the basic draft law on autonomy, and in September it was adopted by the Nicaraguan National Assembly.

From now on the two autonomous regions will have their own parliaments and local governments which will be responsible for administration, public health and education and the maintenance of law and order. Questions of national defence and foreign policy will remain the prerogative of the central government in Managua. The autonomous regions have the right to utilize natural resources within the framework of the national economic development plan. Two types of ownership have been established - national and communal. Communal property can be disposed of only by the ethnic groups themselves.

A significant event occurred early in October. A group of 400 armed Indians headed by Uriel Vanegas ceased its opposition to the government and joined the process of national reconciliation. "We are for the autonomy of the Atlantic coast," Uriel Vanegas stated. "We are prepared to support any programme of the Sandinist Front that accords with the interests of the Indians." A section of the former contras joined the Sandinist People's Army, while the rest decided to engage in peaceful work in the newly established autonomous regions.

Recent events clearly show that any difficulties can be overcome and any problems solved by the concerted efforts of the governments of the autonomous regions and the central government. The main task is to end the war and establish peace.

Managua

DEMOCRACY AND THE INDIVIDUAL

Academician ANATOLY LOGUNOV

We must learn to practise democracy. This is an oft-repeated thesis today. But how often do we stop to give serious thought to **where** we fall short, **what** we ought above all to learn? **What** exactly is the nature of the difficulties we have to overcome in the process of the renewal of our life? Searching for the answers to these questions we perceive that the roots of many of the difficulties and anxieties that beset us lie in ourselves. Both in those described as ordinary working people and, perhaps to an ever greater extent, those in leading positions.

The goal we have set ourselves cannot be achieved by a short-lived campaign. To impart a lasting forward movement to our society is an objective necessity. And even if at some moment we imagined we had already attained a measure of perfection, we would be bound to start lagging behind and marking time. Consequently, we must take forward movement for granted, as something normal, natural in the life of society. This is by no means easy, considering the moral and psychological handicap with which we launched on perestroika.

True democracy implies the release of the creative forces latent in **each** and **everyone**; restoring (or initiating?) the ability of **each** and **everyone** to state his position; cultivating the habit of working out important decisions on the basis of the people's opinion.

In this context a great responsibility devolves on the leaders. For them the task of "learning to practise democracy" proves not infrequently to be far from simple and at times even insoluble.

This, it seems to me, has a direct bearing on what happened recently in the Moscow city organization of the Party. Its First Secretary, Boris Yeltsin, stepped down from his post. How did this come about, how could it happen? Had we not yearned in the years of stagnation, years infected with double-thinking and indifference to what was going on, for vigorous energetic personalities utterly dedicated to the task in hand? We welcome such individuals with open arms. And then it happened... Was it unpredicatable? I believe that unexpected though it certainly was, there was nevertheless a certain logic to it.

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If I am not mistaken, Leo Tolstoy once said that for several men to lift a log one of them has to give the signal. True enough. And the same applies to everything: where to carry the log, to whom, and how... Did our own social mechanism not work along the same lines for many years? The command style prevailed at all levels, among leading executives of all ranks. That style, I would say, had become ingrained in us over a very long period of time.

Today that style, that mode of behaviour must go once and for all. And, as I can see for myself, at the level of the Central Committee of the Party it is going: here the discussions are always pointed and businesslike, and always quite free and comradely. Now it is up to every individual in a leading position to create a similar atmosphere in his own collective. And the way to do this is by educating, teaching the people you work with.

But this is easier said than done. As I see it, Boris Yeltsin was unable to cope with this task. He ought to have relied more on people, on the activists, he should have taught them, won their support, worked patiently and persistently for some measure of success, however minor. Instead, he began to reshuffle personnel. It is very important to know how to work with people.

We know of many instances when some energetic and talented executive took over a collective corroded with conservatism, accustomed to working half-heartedly, and tried to stir up this "sleepy hollow," only to find that all his efforts came up against active resistance. Various factions, instances of the "corporate mentality" sprang up. And the executive saw that this could not go on, since "the quiet life" of this collective amounted to parasitizing on the body of the people.

The impression was created that it was precisely these routine collectives that gave rise to the command, pressure style of leadership. The "fighter," "martyr" type of leader came to the fore. These were often really progressive, dedicated men who, as alas was only logical, were brought to grief by their own collectives, often with tacit, or on the contrary, active, support from above - witness the Lysenko malaise. How many talented people were crushed under this juggernaut! Is all this still going on?

Today, the wiser for experience and pondering on the nature of the "leader-collective" conflicts, we see that there is one more important component involved - the character, the **quality of relations between individuals.** And it is precisely the need to rely on people that is becoming one of the main, if not the main, commandment of perestroika.

Practical experience shows that this truth is still difficult both to understand and to carry into effect. Perhaps because it was so long ignored, and perhaps also because it places great moral and spiritual demands upon people. I would even say, realizing the difficulties leaders today have to contend with, that it calls for selfless dedication.

Some time ago the Moscow City Committee of the CPSU conducted a poll in our Party organization. Here is the answer I gave to one of the questions asked: it is necessary to heighten people's sense of responsibility, to place higher demands on them, but above all to avoid intimidating people. I personally like to work with strong-willed people. But where pressure is brought to bear there is bound to be a counterreaction of fear. And in that case the positive qualities of the leader are negated.

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One often hears it said in some high-level office: "This is not a charity organization!" There is work to be done, and fussing with people, teaching them, helping them, clarifying things for them take far too much time and energy. And in general, how can the resolving of industrial problems be combined with the education or reeducation of people? Have we the time for that? This problem cannot be evaded, of course. But what alternative have we?

The point is that the two problems have to be solved simultaneously - the new organization of the work itself has to be **combined** with the education of the free, creatively-thinking person. There is no other avenue to renewal. And if you are doing a big job which calls for the participation of a big collective, and the job cannot be done by you alone but only collectively, then that collective has to be **built** and infused with a creative spirit.

I work in the field of science. I have students and postgraduates, and if I were to give them nothing but instructions and frighten them with the consequences of not carrying out those instructions, that would eventually spell the end of our scientific collective. Why? Because today, let us say, I have ideas, but tomorrow I might no longer have any, and my well-disciplined staff will look at me and wait in silence because that is how it has been conditioned,

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Anatoly Logunov is a member of the Central Committee of the CPSU, Vice-President of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences and Rector of the Lomonosov State University in Moscow.

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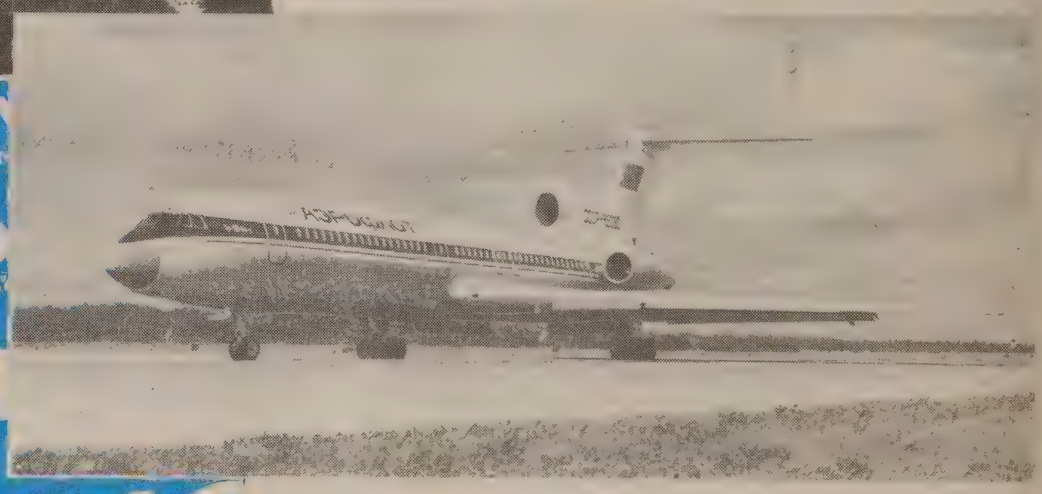

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arr. 09.00	Manchester	dep. 11.00
Sunday	Airport	Sunday

Welcome to the Soviet Union

educated. What is the alternative? To build a creative atmosphere in which they will think and I will think, and in joint discussion new, good ideas will be born and we shall have helped to bring them into being. You cannot do without creative thinking on the part of **everyone,** however brilliant a leader you may be.

How often does one meet young, gifted people who have no faith in their own powers, who above all need moral support, who need someone to encourage them, to say: "Go ahead and try. You're talented!" How many such instances of encouragement can we cite? It seems to me that we have lost some of our generosity of spirit. At times one hears the categorical statement: "You don't understand anything," "you'll never amount to anything." Many a gifted person has been hopelessly discouraged in this way. Of course, in all justice it must be said that there are talents that cannot be destroyed, talents which no amount of adversity can discourage. Our country has no lack of such talent, thank goodness!

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Nevertheless, we must not delude ourselves. We must bring out the creative potential of people at all costs.

How much time and energy did Lenin in his time spend on talking to people, mingling freely with them, popularizing ideas, conversing personally with them! Why did he make a point of meeting all kinds of deputations? It was from these crumbs of information that he pieced together a picture of the trend of development. A great man, he was able to perceive in the opinions voiced by one person something of fundamental importance for the whole of society. And what about his attitude to his fellow party members? It was at once considerate and demanding. In those days if someone in a leading position ceased to keep abreast of the time and the methods required by it and if he did not have the strength to keep pace with the times, he would retire. Why are we today so accustomed to officeholders either climbing steadily upwards or being dropped completely? In life things are rather more complicated. Perhaps an executive who fails to make the grade in one post should, if this is in the public interest, simply be transferred to another equally necessary post where he might make a better showing? A strong man always learns from the lessons of life. In this respect we ought to pay less attention to observance of the "table of rank," that old, neglected bureaucratic malady.

TO THOSE WHO ONLY YESTERDAY WERE CONSIDERED "RANK-AND-FILE" WE SAY: YOU ARE NOT A MERE COG, HOLD YOUR HEAD HIGH.

Yes, acceleration is the device of our time, and we have every right to repeat Herzen's maxim: "The device of our time is more than ever semper in motu (always in motion)." But accelerating the rate of development does not mean trying to outstrip the march of history, the objective course of events. For acceleration stems from the logic of objective development. To a considerable extent that logic determines also the speed of acceleration. Of course, the pace could be increased, that is within our power. But how, by what means? Would we not jeopardize the ultimate objective by being indiscriminate in the choice of means?

Why must we still act with caution? Because what is happening today in our country is a major turn, one in which our whole system is involved. And the condition of that system when the turning point was reached should be kept in mind. It must be admitted that we were no longer fully aware of what was happening to our society, we did not know our society properly, and only now have we begun to probe it more deeply.

Take many of the initiatives that are being put into practice today. Were they to be viewed with "yesterday's eyes," they would strike many as running completely counter to the character of our society. Actually, however, in practice and in theory, what is under way is a process of deeper perception, analysis of the nature of real socialism. Here it must be admitted that science, the scientists, have contributed very little to this process. Needless to say, that is not entirely their fault - the climate of the past years, the general standstill could not but affect science.

In large measure this applies to economics. Like any science, it cannot stand still, otherwise it begins to degenerate. Is that not exactly what happened? For we cannot say today that economic thinking was in the forefront. Or that scholars had the courage in those days to expound their progressive ideas.

For if that were so, they should surely have had a backlog of blueprints and unpublished projects left? At least that. But the day came when they were asked what they had to offer, and what did they have? That is how, it came about that today we are all very adept at exposing shortcomings, but to think constructively, creatively and fruitfully is quite another matter.

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These reflections bring us once again to the problem of the role of the individual in society. I have often been asked to explain why it is that we speak of the inexhaustible potential of outstanding personalities, expecting them to write things that will never get beyond the desk drawer, to create not for some momentary advantage but for the sake of the Truth, to produce manuscripts of lasting value.... To those who only yesterday were considered "rank-and-file" we say: you are not a mere cog, hold your head high, show what you can do.... Yet when such people become involved in collective labour, we ourselves - or so it seems at first glance - put blinkers on them, reproach them, call them to order when they become independent and when perhaps only by the force of inertia they begin to outstrip those around them.

I agree there is a dramatic element, an inner tension in this approach to the problem. But there is no insoluble contradiction here. For genuine democracy does not mean blinkers for talented people. This is clear to me from the example of science. For science cannot advance if there is no democratic expression of opinion. Even if the level of all the participants in the discussion is none too high. It is nevertheless essential. Someone will make a start, that will give someone else an idea and that idea may produce results later. And all this taken together will stimulate creative thought. A group of the more active will emerge to take the lead, others will be left behind. But the dominant element here will be a **battle of ideas,** not ambitions. Conflicts? Yes, there will be conflicts, but they will be **in defence of the common cause** and not because of the position of one or another personage. The interests of the work in hand will be the only criterion.

If I were to be asked where I see the guarantee that the internal climate of our society will become healthier, the guarantee that the free development of creative forces will not degenerate into the voluntarism of individuals, I would reply: the only guarantee is democratic discussion of problems. The important thing is that the chorus in that discussion should not sing in unison; that it should be a many-voiced, polyphonic chorus; that the critical voices in it should make themselves heard and that the critical notes should not jar on our sensitive ears! That the choirmaster should be able to hear and to heed every voice in that chorus, and that this should become a compulsive need.

Moreover, coming to think of it, this approach is close to our national tradition. It may not always have been realized in practice, but it was always regarded as the **ideal of behavior.** In this context the idea of **education,** the principle of tireless, painstaking work with people, as distinct from the far harsher rules of behaviour characteristic of the commercialized life in the West, should not only be preserved, but developed further in our society. Yes, our movement forward is far from smooth. But our path, thorny though it may be, is a path to Man, to the human being. Consequently, the means to the end must also be "humanized." Only on this condition is genuine democracy possible. ■

PALESTINE: FORTY YEARS OF TRAGEDY

ALEXANDER ZOTOV

Forty years ago, on October 29, 1947, the U.N. General Assembly adopted Resolution 181 on the partition of Palestine, then under British Mandate, into two independent states - a Jewish and an Arab - to be linked by an economic union, as well as giving international status to Jerusalem.

It was a difficult decision, adopted in the difficult postwar years. The rout of fascism had, however, inspired the peoples who were still either under colonial rule or in semicolonial dependence to struggle actively for their freedom and national dignity. The Palestinian Arabs, who before the war had fought against the British military administration, also sought national liberation. But they had not fought only against the British administration. The Arabs saw a special threat to themselves in the fact that full play was being given with British connivance (the 1917 Balfour Declaration) to the implementation of the old Zionist plan to create in Palestine a purely Jewish state as part of their right to self-determination in their "historic homeland." The Palestinians saw a challenge in the very concept of bringing together on their land Jews from the Diaspora (dispersion), who for almost two thousand years had been scattered across the world. A further challenge to the Palestinians, one that stimulated the growth of their national consciousness and their determination to defend themselves were the violent methods used by the Zionists in preparing "a place in the sun" in Palestine for the reception of ever greater numbers of immigrants.

A hard prologue

At the same time, the world community could not ignore the crimes committed by the nazis against the Jewish population in Europe. Many of the Jews who had survived Hitler's death machine wanted to flee from the horrors they had lived through. Special Zionist services took advantage of this and organized routes to bring new immigrants to Palestine. And while they were on their way to their "historic homeland," it was impressed on them that in order to set up their own state in Palestine where they could live in safety, it was necessary to take land from the local Arabs. By 1947, Arabs made up three quarters of the population of Palestine. Three decades earlier, when Britain had promised to help create a Jewish national homeland in the area, over 90 per cent of the population had been Arabs. Incidentally, the British had also promised the Arab majority that they would turn their mandated territory into an Arab state.

When Resolution 181 was adopted, Palestine was virtually uncontrollable - armed units of both sides were operating, and acts of violence were being committed. Britain, faced by the complexities of her "dual pledges" to the Arabs and the Jews, announced that she was giving up the League of Nations mandate.

So it fell to the United Nations to decide the fate of Palestine. It considered two possible variants: either a single state populated by two nationalities, or the formation of two separate states on the basis of partition into regions with predominantly Arab or Jewish populations. The Soviet delegation favoured an independent democratic Arab-Jewish state in which both communities would have equal rights. In May 1947, the Soviet Union declared that such a solution could provide a healthy basis for peaceful coexistence and cooperation between the Arabs and the Jews in Palestine, and for peace and security in the Middle East.

However, a special U.N. commission came to the conclusion that this would not solve the problem as the Zionist leaders would never abandon their plans to set up an exclusively Jewish state. In view of these circumstances, the Soviet Union called for the setting up of two separate states, as no alternative existed that could be implemented in practice. The Arab countries opposed such a solution. Arab representatives in the U.N. criticized those (including the U.S.S.R.) who were ready to support the plan for the partition of Palestine. Explaining the Soviet stand, the leader of the Soviet delegation to the U.N. Andrei Gromyko made what I see as a surprisingly prophetic statement on November 29, 1947. "The Soviet delegation," he said, "firmly believes that in the years to come the Arabs and the Arab states will on many occasions look to

Moscow in the expectation of help from the Soviet Union in their struggle for their legitimate interests, in their efforts to rid themselves of the vestiges of foreign dependence."

Counting on lawlessness

Immediately after the Union Jack had been lowered from the residence of the British High Commissioner in Palestine on May 14, 1948, the independence of Israel - "a Jewish state on Israeli soil" - was proclaimed. Israel was formed on the lands which the Zionists had by that time succeeded in capturing, regardless of the territorial divisions determined by the resolution of the U.N. General Assembly. The history of the Palestinian tragedy includes such events at that time as the massacre in the village of Deir Yassin (near Jerusalem) on April 9, 1948, carried out by units of the terrorist Zionist organizations, the Stern and Irgun. After that massacre, thousands of Palestinians fled their homes, fearing for their lives. By the end of 1949, the number of refugees amounted to almost three quarters of a million - about half the native Palestinian population at the time.

There was nothing haphazard about the actions of the Zionist leadership. Everything was done in accordance with the theoretical postulates of the founder of political Zionism, Theodor Herzl. At the beginning of the century he wrote that "in tiny Palestine there is no room for both peoples. The only solution can be a Palestine without Arabs.... Only then will our country be able to accept millions of our brethren." Herzl suggested that all Palestinian Arabs, without exception, should be deported to neighbouring Arab states.

And so Israel was founded. And, as was stated in the Declaration of Independence, it had taken the "necessary steps" to implement the General Assembly Resolution of November 29, 1947, which was interpreted exclusively as U.N. recognition of the right of the Jewish people to set up their own state, as this was "the natural right, as of all other nations, to be masters of their destinies in their own sovereign state." That this resolution gave the Palestine Arabs the same right to set up an independent state of their own Israel immediately forgot.

Then events took the following course. The armies of a number of neighbouring Arab countries, at that time mostly pro-British monarchies, clashed with Israeli armed forces, but were unsuccessful. The cease-fire agreement signed in 1949 signified Israel's de facto existence within new boundaries expanded by almost fifty per cent and including West Jerusalem, while at the same time remaining at war with the Arabs. The West Bank of the Jordan River became part of Jordan, while the Gaza Strip was handed over to be administered by Egypt. In 1949 Israel became a member of the United Nations and was reminded that Resolution 181 envisaged the partition of Palestine and that Resolution 194 (III) gave Palestinian refugees the right to return to their homes. That meant that Israel was obliged to recognize the right of Palestinian Arabs to form their own state.

What makes this period extremely important is the Zionists' claim that the Arabs have only themselves to blame, as they missed their chance for a Palestinian settlement by insisting on too much, failure to show flexibility, and reluctance to reconcile themselves with the creation of Israel. Most of these claims are nonsense, but the actions of the Arab rulers at the time were to a certain extent affected by shortsightedness, egoism and inability to take important decisions jointly. All this increased the sufferings of the Palestinians, but did not affect their lawful rights.

Resolution No. 242

The Palestinians had to fight for their rights in new and much harder conditions, when 20 years later, as a result of the 1967 "six-day war," Israel captured all the Palestinian lands. The West Bank of the Jordan, the Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem - all were occupied by the Israeli military. The annexation of East Jerusalem was made official immediately, despite U.N. protests. Since then almost a million and a half Palestinians have been living under the Israeli military heel. Israel, in the meantime, is taking over new lands on the pretext of its "security needs," organizing colonialist settlements of its people, undermining the local economy, and gradually annexing the captured Palestinian lands.

No one can expect the Palestinians to look on from the sidelines as passive observers. Of course not. The struggle for justice for the Palestinians is at the core of the efforts to achieve a Middle East settlement, as the solution of the Palestinian problem is the key to peace in the Middle East. In this struggle the role of the vanguard belongs to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). Leaning on the support of the Palestinian peoples' masses, wherever they may live, the PLO seeks the liberation of the Israeli-occupied territories - the West Bank of the Jordan and the Gaza Strip, so as to ensure the Palestinians the possibility of finally implementing their right to self-determination and the establishment of a state of their own as set out in the same U.N. resolution on the basis of which Israel itself was formed.

Looking back with hindsight on the events in the Middle East, it is clear why the PLO regards as inadequate Security Council Resolution 242 of November 22, 1967, which, while demanding that Israel withdraw its troops from territories occupied during the "six-day war," only notes the need for a just settlement of the refugee problem. The resolution also mentions the right of all states in the region to live in peace and security, as well as the need to respect their sovereignty and territorial integrity. The question of the national destiny of the Palestinian people was dropped from the resolution in view of the specific condi-

Children's drawings on a PLO hospital wall.

Photo by E. Korshunov

tions and circumstances of that particular moment, as the main issue was to minimize the effects of the direct consequences of Israel's June aggression.

Tel Aviv and certain Western circles maintain that the Palestine Liberation Organization's refusal to recognize Israel's right to existence is the reason for its rejection of Resolution 242. This is not true. The PLO, as can be seen from numerous statements by its leaders, is ready to accept the resolution, together with all other U.N. resolutions on the Palestinian issue adopted over the years. Tel Aviv dislikes many of them, as they condemn Israel for not fulfilling some of the requirements imposed by the U.N. and international law. Yet all the resolutions procede from the recognized fact of the existence of Israel as a sovereign state with all the rights of such a state, and, we should add - all its obligations. The only thing the PLO insists on when its acceptance of Resolution 242 is demanded is that simultaneously with this acceptance the right of the Palestinians as a nation to self-determination should likewise be recognized.

The PLO's policy on a Middle East settlement has for some time now been flexible, leaving room for sensible compromises. It is enough to say that its leadership has now taken a positive attitude to a dialogue with those public groups in Israel that want a just and peaceful settlement. It is also prepared to conduct, within the framework of an international conference on the Middle East, direct talks with official Israeli representatives. Israel, on the other hand, continues to refuse categorically to have anything to do with the PLO. And that more than anything else is the obstacle to convening a peace conference.

Tel Aviv, together with Washington, would like to brand the PLO as a terrorist movement so as to "disqualify" it from participation in the peace process. A law passed in Israel makes any contacts with PLO representatives a crime. This year in the United States, under the pressure from Zionist circles, it was decided to impose a ban on the activities of all Palestinian representatives, including the PLO mission at the U.N. (it has observer status at the U.N. and functions in accordance with a General Assembly resolution and a corresponding agreement with the U.N. Secretary-General). Only legal difficulties forced the State Department to back down with regard to the PLO mission at the U.N., but its activities were nevertheless described as unlawful.

The Palestine resistance movement does resort to the use of military force, and it does resort to armed attacks. But that, in principle, does not contradict the norms of international law when there is question of struggling against oppression, foreign occupation, racial discrimination or a harsh dictatorship. It should be remembered that many Israelis, including certain well-known political leaders, themselves took part in terrorist acts against the British military administration in Palestine when fighting for the establishment of an Israeli state.

Condemning terrorism

The terrorist actions undertaken in the past by separate Palestinian groups did more harm than good to the PLO, and the Palestinian cause as a whole. Israel used them to justify its own state terrorism, conducted on a much bigger scale, and as a cover for "lawful self-defence." Take, for instance, the Israeli aggression against Lebanon in June 1982: it was launched as a "Peace for Galilee" operation designed allegedly to make that northern region of Israel safe from Palestinian attacks. As a result thousands upon thousands of Palestinians and Lebanese lost their lives. It was with Israeli participation that a bloody massacre was carried out in the Sabra and Shatila Palestinian camps and hundreds of Palestinians thrown into concentration camps.

In the past few years the PLO has repeatedly stated that it regards as lawful only the operations conducted either inside Israel itself or in the Arab territories it occupies. PLO chairman Yasser Arafat in a speech in Cairo two years ago declared that he condemns any violation of human rights, including the right to life and security, just as he condemns all terrorist acts committed by states, individuals or groups against innocent and unarmed civilians. That is also clearly stated in the joint communiqué issued at the end of the visit to Moscow in June 1987 of a delegation from the PLO Executive Committee led by Farouk Al-Kaddoumi. The communiqué notes that the U.S.S.R, and the PLO strongly condemn terrorist actions carried out by individuals, groups or states, and seek the stepping up of international cooperation to eradicate terrorism by lawful means.

The question of terrorism affects not only the prestige of the PLO, but is also directly linked with the problem of arranging a comprehensive Middle East settlement. Israel is doing its utmost to paint the Palestine resistance movement as a motley collection of bandits that will not give up until Israel has disappeared from the map of the Middle East. Its argument is that the PLO has not renounced the slogan of continuing the strugle until all of Palestine is liberated, and therefore any weakening of Israeli control over the occupied Palestinian territories would favour the PLO, without mentioning the withdrawal of troops, which would create the threat of a mortal danger to the security and even the very existence of Israel. The conclusion drawn from this is that the defeat of the PLO, and the Palestine resistance movement in general, is an essential condition for any settlement, which would to a certain extent take into account the everyday interests of those silent Palestinians who would be prepared to live in an Israeli protectorate.

This logic, however, fails to consider, in fact ignores, a number of very important political facts. To any more or less well-informed observer it is now clear that the PLO has accepted the concept of the coexistence of a future Palestinian state with Israel. We in the Soviet Union can state that there are no substantial differences between us and the PLO on the Soviet proposals for a Middle East settlement, yet these proposals confirm unambiguously the right of all countries and peoples in the Middle East, including Israel, to a peaceful and secure existence.

It is also worth recalling that the PLO leadership has long accepted the concept of Palestinian-Israel coexistence on the basis of the implementation by both the Palestinians and the Jews of their right to national self-determination. Israel has existed as a state for forty years, and today it also occupies the territories on which the Palestinians could have built their national state. It has to be admitted that among the Palestinian masses, especially among those in the refugee camps in various Arab countries, many still abide by the old slogans that were at one time part of the PLO Manifesto - the National Charter, slogans calling for the liberation of Palestine through armed struggle. This is understandable: for the refugees are mostly former inhabitants (or their descendants) of those parts of Palestine from which the state of Israel was formed. If they were to accept the existence of Israel as an accomplished fact, it would mean an end to any hopes of a return to their homes, a right recognized in U.N. resolutions. That is why it was not easy for the 12th session of the Palestine National Council (the Palestinian parliament) in 1974 to adopt the decision to seek the setting up of "Palestinian national power" on any territory liberated from Israeli occupation. For that in effect meant recognizing the parallel existence of both an Israeli and a Palestinian national state.

Who can make the difficult decisions?

The question of Palestinian self-determination is extremely important, as Israel

and the United States seek to explain their opposition to this Palestinian right by saying that it is a synonym for their right to form a sovereign state of their own. Tel Aviv and Washington are likewise opposed to any hint of a possibility of the Palestinians acquiring statehood. Moreover, they insist that the Palestinians should in advance, even before the process of a political settlement is started, abandon their plans to live in their own country. Naturally, the PLO cannot agree to any such demand, as giving in (officially

The diagrams show: two states which were to have been formed on the Palestine territory under a 1947 U.N. plan; the actual situation today resulting from Israel's illegal actions.
From the National Geographic journal (U.S.A.)

recognizing Israel, ending their active struggle against the Israeli occupation, and putting a full stop to the Palestinians' desire for national independence) would mean the self-liquidation of the movement.

But is there really any mortal danger to Israel in implementing at least the spirit if not the letter of the ideas of General Assembly Resolution 181 on the setting up of two states? Personally, I am convinced that in the long term it would be to Israel's advantage to agree to Palestinian statehood rather than be forced endlessly to assume a punitive role. The heated nationalistic atmosphere (and lately it has begun to take on the form of religious fanaticism!) will begin to normalize and the situation will become calmer only when the Palestinians receive recognized national legal status and cease to be a nation of refugees. It is through Palestinian statehood that the question of national destiny can be resolved for both the inhabitants of occupied territories - the West Bank of the Jordan and the Gaza Strip, and those Palestinians whom fate has settled outside their country. Although they live in Arab countries (if one can describe life in a refugee camp as living), they have not integrated with the Arab community and acutely feel the need to belong to their own country. The truth has to be faced - they now have no chance of implementing their right to return to their old homes in, say, Jaffa (of which Tel Aviv was once a suburb and which, under Resolution 181, was to have been an Arab enclave) or to Haifa. Nor will these people find it easy to settle on the West Bank of the Jordan, let alone in the overpopulated Gaza, even if these territories become part of a Palestinian state. Because there are hundreds of thousands of such people, and that is much more than the limited possibilities of these Palestinian territories can cope with. Consequently it is hardly likely that a future Palestinian state could become (to use Israeli terminology) a place where the Palestinians would be brought together from their scattered present places of abode. So the formation of an independent Palestinian state would in practice lead not to the transplantation of masses of Palestinians, but would first of all allow them to become citizens of that state, and through that they would be able, in an orderly and civilized manner, to decide for themselves the question of their actual domicile. But it is hopeless to try and tell people without citizenship, without passports or any hope of a full life: "Give up your struggle, relax in your present ghettoes!"

There is a further important point. Once the Palestinians have obtained the lawful right to set up a sovereign state, they might well prefer other ways of putting this right to self-determination into practice. The Palestinians have special ties with Jordan where they account for more than half the population. So it is quite possible that the Palestinians will choose to set up a Palestinian-Jordanian Federation or Confederation. Such a settlement of the issue is talked about a great deal at present, and is also being discussed in Israel and the West, but often the matter is put in this way: in the composition of its population, Jordan is almost a Palestinian state, and Palestinians, say from the West Bank, could in one form or other join it under a settlement Jordan's King Hussein would agree upon at direct talks with Israel. Certain Palestinian representatives could be allowed to take part in such talks, but not open PLO supporters. That was the mechanism which the "Reagan plan" for the Middle East had in mind when it was put forward five years ago. The Palestinians - and not only those in the PLO leadership, but the Palestinian masses as well - firmly reject any such schemes. As far as I understand, they are not against union with Jordan in principle, even union in the form of confederate state. What they are against is that a decision on their future should from the outset be in the hands of others, as the Palestinians have not been offered equal, truly representative participation in the process of reaching a settlement.

It is believed that difficult decisions and painful compromises are something that only strong leaders can afford, leaders with the reputation of being unyielding. Only they can persuade the masses of the need for concessions and justify them. This logic was often applied in the West, for instance, to the former Israeli premier, fanatical right-wing Zionist Menachem Begin, when he participated in the Camp David talks. But it is never applied, at least by Israel and the United States, to the Palestine Liberation Organization. Yet no one except that organization, as the generally accepted sole lawful representative of the Palestinian people, will assume the arduous task of agreeing to a formula for settlement that inevitably implies renunciation of much that millions of Palestinians regard as their own. The burden of historical responsibility would be too heavy to anyone - whether King Hussein or someone else who on behalf of Palestinians or, to be more precise, instead of them, took it upon himself to determine their destiny.

Is the PLO sufficiently strong to act with political boldness and assess the situation realistically. Could the burden of historic responsibility crush it? These questions are quite justified, especially given that Israel had done its utmost to break the back of the Palestine resistance movement (remember the aggression in Lebanon) and leave the PLO without leaders (remember the piratical air attack on its headquarters in Tunisia). The Palestinian movement has indeed known hard times. Things even went as far as a split in its ranks and serious complications in the PLO's relations with a number of Arab states, especially Syria; and without close cooperation with Syria the Palestinian struggle has little chance of success. This stage of weakness and dissent is now receding, as can be seen from the successful 18th reunification session of the Palestine National Council in Algeria last April. Support for the PLO by the mass of the Palestinian people remains unshaken. Only to that organization - their lawful and sole representative - do the disinherited Palestinian people give a mandate to take part in peaceful negotiations within the framework of an international conference on the Middle East. And only the participation of the PLO in such a conference can lead to the adoption of decisions on the Palestine question that would be understood and accepted by the Palestinians.

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Contacts and priorities

Two dates of major importance in Albania's history are marked in November: the proclamation of independence on November 28, 1912, and the country's liberation from fascist occupation on November 29, 1944.

November 28, 1912, was an important milestone in the Albanian people's age-old struggle for freedom and national dignity. However, despite the historic importance of the proclamation of independence, Albania remained a semicolony over many years, and was again deprived of independence in 1939 as a result of invasion and occupation by fascist Italy. It was only victory in the war of national liberation under the leadership of the Albanian Communist Party (now the Albanian Party of Labour) in 1944, and the establishment of people's power, that brought Albania complete independence. The country then had the opportunity to decide on its home and foreign policy.

The content and main directions of Albania's foreign policy at the present juncture were defined at the Ninth Congress of the Albanian Party of Labour (November 1986) and in subsequent statements by Albanian leaders. Its chief objectives are the preservation and consolidation of the country's freedom and independence and the ensurance of peaceful conditions for socialist construction.

Albania is conscious of the need for a decisive struggle to ensure peace and end the arms race, as well as of the danger posed by nuclear weapons to life on earth, and the fact that present-day local, regional or continental problems affect all nations to some or other degree.

Albania favours a complete end to nuclear testing, the withdrawal of foreign troops and the dismantling of foreign missile and other military bases on the territory of any country, and the disbanding of military blocs, and is opposed to the militarization of outer space. It rejects the policy of neoglobalism and state terrorism and condemns racism and apartheid.

The Republic states in no uncertain terms that efforts to impose one's ideas or way of life on other peoples are not to be tolerated and that there is no alternative to peaceful coexistence between countries with different social systems.

A street scene in the Albanian capital, Tirana.

Photo from L'Express (France)

However, in assessing the international situation today Albania proceeds from the familiar thesis of the "equal responsibility of the superpowers" for the aggravation of tension and the outbreak and persistence of crises.

Albania proclaims the wish to have normal relations with all countries that "observe universally recognized principles of non-interference in internal affairs, equality and mutual respect, inviolability of sovereignty and territorial integrity." Preference is given to the neighbouring Balkan countries. The press has reported Albania's decision to participate in a meeting of foreign ministers of the Balkan countries.

Last August the Greek government decided to end the formal state of war with Albania that had existed, in the opinion of Greece, since 1940. That act cleared the way for the development of Albanian-Greek relations. Deputy Foreign Minister of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania Sokrat Plaka then made an official visit to Greece, and an agreement between the radio and television services of the two countries and an intergovernment cultural exchange programme were signed. Greek Foreign Minister Carolos Papoulias, accompanied by other cabinet members, businessmen and journalists, made an official friendly visit to Albania in November.

Following the establishment of diplomatic relations with the F.R.G. in October, F.R.G. Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher paid a visit to Tirana. Commenting on the results of the visit, the West German Frankfurter Allgemeine stressed that economic, scientific, technological and cultural cooperation between the two countries should be cemented by a treaty.

Great Britain is the only major European capitalist country with which Albania has no diplomatic relations. The main obstacles to restored relations between them are the problem of the return to Albania of its gold reserve, seized by Germany during the war and "frozen" in London banks, and the British government's demands that Albania pay compensation for two British naval vessels that hit mines in Albanian territorial waters in 1946. Speaking at the tenth congress of the Albanian trade unions on June 25, the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Albanian Party of Labour and President of the Presidium of the Albanian People's Assembly, Ramiz Alia, said that Albania was ready to resolve the problem in a constructive way if London "rid itself of the prejudices of cold war times" and "showed good will and a desire for a thaw in Anglo-Albanian relations."

Albania now has diplomatic relations with 112 countries. In addition to the F.R.G., it established diplomatic relations this year with Jordan, the Philippines, Bolivia, Canada and Uruguay.

The gradual increase of the volume of trade with European socialist countries, particularly Bulgaria, the G.D.R. and Romania, and with China, was noted at the Ninth Congress of the Albanian Party of Labour. Readiness for the development of normal relations with them was expressed. Mongolia's ambassador to Albania presented his credentials in October 1987.

Albania has commercial and economic ties with more than 50 countries, and the greater part of its trade is with socialist countries. Agreements on cooperation in the health services were signed by Albania in 1986 with a number of countries, among them the G.D.R. and Hungary.

As for Soviet-Albanian relations, the U.S.S.R. has more than once expressed its readiness to normalize them. The Soviet Union believes, as ever, that given mutual good will, the matter could be settled in the interests of both countries and the cause of peace and socialism.

VALERY OLGIN

Weather to clear

The International Barometer of Peace project has recently been started on the initiative of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences Institute of Sociological Research. Its purpose is to survey public opinion in the East and the West on the problems of war and peace and the new political thinking. The first results are summed up by the supervisor of the project, the institute's director, Professor VILEN IVANOV.

Researchers working on the project have established cooperation with sociologists in socialist countries and France, Japan and Finland. Jointly with the Gallup Institute in the U.S.A. we hold opinion polls on the same questionnaire in the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. We are glad that New Times is now participating in the survey, and we wish to offer its readers a sampling of public opinion on Soviet-U.S. relations now that the summit meeting is drawing nearer.

"What is your attitude to America?"

The United States is usually viewed by Soviet people in two ways - as a great nation and as the leading imperialist power. The public opinion survey centre at the Institute of Sociological Research put the following question: "What is your attitude to the American people?" In eight cases out of ten, Soviet people expressed a positive attitude to the American people. Less than three per cent of those polled had a negative attitude.

The attitude to the U.S. administration was probed mainly by means of indirect questions. In May 1987, nine people out of ten believed it was the United States that was responsible for the continued arms race, and eight out of ten held that the U.S.S.R. had reason to distrust the United States' assurances that it desired to consolidate peace. Four per cent of the poll were prepared to trust the U.S.A. Only eight per cent of Muscovites had a positive attitude to the U.S. government....

A further point about mutual trust: in February 1987 only eight per cent of Muscovites believed that the U.S.A. would refrain from the first use of nuclear weapons, while 23 per cent of Americans believed that the U.S.S.R. would never be the first to use nuclear weapons.

"What is your attitude to the Soviet Union?"

When this question is put to Americans, they usually respond with another one: "Who do you mean? The Soviet people or their government?" Americans traditionally distinguish between the people and the government. On the whole the Americans have some measure of sympathy for the Soviet people, but as for the state, nearly half of Americans still subscribe to President Reagan's view of the Soviet Union as an "empire of evil."

Sociologists put the question this way: "What words suggest themselves when you think of the Soviet Union?" The response was characteristic: "communism," "nuclear war," "nuclear weapons," "enemy," "disorder...."

Concerning optimism

The following question was put during the Soviet-American poll of teenager opinion last year: "Do you believe friendship and cooperation can be established between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A.?" Only 29 per cent of American teenagers answered in the affirmative, as compared with 72 per cent of teenagers in the U.S.S.R. The optimism of Soviet youth is matched by that of their parents, particularly with regard to foreign policy. Eight out of ten Muscovites polled last spring held that peaceful coexistence between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. was possible. The same percentage of Muscovites is optimistic about the possibility of improved East-West relations as a whole.

Seven Soviet citizens in ten are sure that "the elimination of nuclear weapons is feasible." It should be noted that only 37 per cent of Americans share this view.

93 per cent of Soviet people are confident that their country will strictly observe the commitment assumed in 1982 to refrain from the first use of nuclear weapons. As for Americans, four out of ten are not sure that their own country will refrain from dealing a first nuclear strike.

Who should be stronger?

Only 12 per cent of Americans hold that the U.S.S.R. does not threaten the U.S.A. And nearly 40 per cent believe that the U.S.A. should be stronger militarily than the U.S.S.R. Just over half of those polled were in favour of a balance of forces.

13-18 per cent of the Soviet people are for the military superiority of their country. 80 per cent are for a balance of forces. It should be noted that the thesis, "my country should be the stronger one," is subscribed to by people in the age groups that remember the war and whose political consciousness was largely formed during the cold war.

To the question "Do you hold that the further buildup and refinement of the nuclear arsenals of the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. will not give an advantage to either side?" answers were as follows (in per cent):

	Yes	No	Don't know
Americans	69	21	10
Soviet people	83	6	11

The prevailing opinion in both countries is that all-out nuclear war cannot be won and that in such a war the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. would be destroyed completely. This is the opinion of 89 per cent of Soviet citizens and 83 per cent of Americans.

What does the barometer tell us?

Weather trends in Soviet-American relations have shifted towards "clear." Last year one in four Americans held that these relations were improving (13 per cent believed that they were deteriorating). The Soviet Union's rating in the U.S. public opinion has markedly improved. 25 per cent of Americans had a positive attitude to the Soviet Union in April 1987. A poll of Muscovites in the autumn of this year established that 40 per cent of them believe that relations between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. have improved in recent years (14 per cent believe they have deteriorated).

The polls show that Soviet people are puzzled by the actions of U.S. right-wing forces, who are now trying to poison the atmosphere of high-level talks. But, as a rule, they do not associate the right-wingers and their actions with all the Americans. ■

Farewell to a hero

He was with Ché Guevara in Bolivia. With his name on their lips, Paris students fought on the barricades in May 1968. Today Régis Debray is in the Elysée Palace.

Getting into the Elysée Palace - the residence of the head of the French state - isn't easy, even if you are expected and have arrived punctually for your appointment. You have to wait in the small porch, surrounded by police, until the man on duty on the other side of the locked door makes sure that you are you. Then in exchange for your passport you are given a visitor's card. The guard escorted me through an inner court yard to an entrance, and then on the next floor turned me over to another man on duty, who escorted me to the cloak room - a small room without windows where I took off my rain coat. I had barely had time to take it off before the secretary opened the door. In nervous haste I gathered my belongings - tape recorder, camera, notebook, pens - and found myself face to face with the man whose name had been familiar to me since my youth, a man with a hero's aureole.

Well-trained secretaries closed the door, the man I had come to see sat down in one of the armchairs on either side of the small table, and with a gesture stopped me switching on the tape recorder.

"This is not an interview," he warned. "I cannot give interviews without the permission of the President of the republic."

"But can I write afterwards about our conversation?"

Permission was granted. But even before I could put the first of the questions I had prepared, Régis Debray was already asking me who in Moscow was resisting the perestroika, what was new in life there, and what new changes we were expecting.... We talked for just under an hour (another visitor was already waiting) and I was trying my hardest to remember everything he said. An impossible task! Is it possible to convey the elegance of his phrases, witty and sharp, but often evasive, betraying an experienced polemist? His gestures were so eloquent. And elegant, reminding me that he was not only from what is described as "a good family," but had studied in one of the best educational establishments in Paris.

It was hot in the office with its closed doors and drawn curtains on the windows, but my host puffing at his cigar seemed to like it that way. At times I felt rather uncomfortable when his blue eyes looked straight at me. There could be no doubt that he had the ability to assess people well. An ability acquired, probably, in dramatic circumstances. For instance, in the prison, where he, Régis Debray - now the President's foreign policy adviser, spent three years.

No one can reproach me...

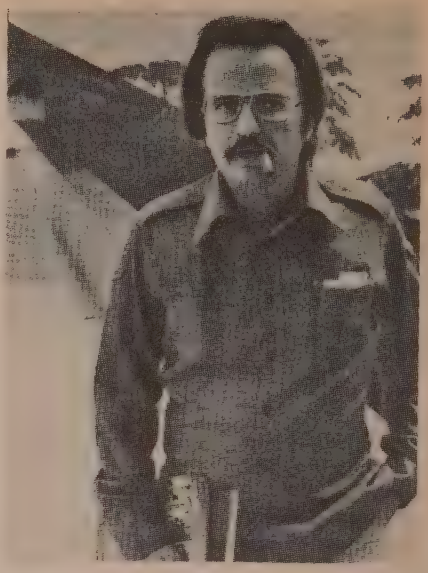
When did I first hear his name? I imagine it must have been in 1967, when Ché Guevara was killed in Bolivia and Debray was arrested.

But in 1967 I was only ten years old and my interest in politics began later. The events of 1968 made a deep impression. I heard about the May revolt by Paris students, backed by the workers, a revolt that in the stormy atmosphere of those days was described as a revolution. The name of Régis Debray, one of the May 1968 leaders, cropped up frequently.

In my first year as a student I read some of Debray's writings and articles about him. The youth movement was then a favourite theme. Everyone was expecting something else to happen, a new wave, mightier and more stormy. It was said that it was inevitable, but when it became evident that something had changed, it was concluded that youth's protest against society would probably never take the same form again.

The man who had been their guiding spirit, Herbert Marcuse, died and dropped out of the arguments of contemporary philosophers. Franz Fanon, the ideologist of guerilla warfare in Third World countries has been forgotten. Rudi Dutschke, the leader of the Federal Germany's rebellous youth, had no future and died in mysterious circumstances. Daniel Cohn-Bendit, the most popular figure on the Paris barricades in 1968, an admirer of Makhno, settled down to a bourgeois life, and is no longer interested in rebelling. And Debray....

When François Mitterrand was elected to the presidency and began to form his staff, I learnt that he had chosen Régis Debray, one of the most brilliant French journalists, to be his foreign policy adviser. The Debray whose works had



Régis Debray. From a Bolivian prison to the Elysée Palace.

inspired the students who had risen against the very foundations of the bourgeois state. The man who had called for a socialist revolution and the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, was now sharing power with them.... One of those veltes-faces that occur so often in history? What does Debray himself think on the subject? I left the Elysée Palace without a tape recording, without any exact quotes.

...I never was an anarchist or against power, he told me. I joined Ché Guevara because I considered it my duty to defend ideas that lay close to my heart. For me it was like a continuation of the struggle of the French Resistants against nazism. I fought against Latin American dictatorships. I am an internationalist.

From my past I learned a number of lessons, Debray went on. I don't believe in professional revolutionaries. One shouldn't go to another country to carry out a revolution there. A Frenchman shouldn't go to Latin America for such a purpose. A Socialist should understand that it is impossible to export his ideas. No one can reproach me. I am not ashamed of my life.

How did I get to the Elysée Palace? I never regarded myself as a politician, Régis Debray continued. When the left came to power, I believed it my duty to join them, to contribute what I could to their cause. That is logical. Apart from everything else, Mitterrand is my friend. When he leaves the Elysée Palace, I leave with him. Power as such holds no attraction for me.

His attitude towards the events of May 1968?

At that time Debray was not in France. He was in a Bolivian prison. The main force

then, the students, were anarchists, unlike the workers. He recalled that what had sparked off the events was the attempt to impose restrictions on the sexual freedom of the young at Nanterre university. That problem no longer exists: there are no restrictions. The revolt in Paris played a considerable role in the development of French society, promoting legal freedoms, the emancipation of women, and therefore May 1968 could be regarded as a victory. French journalism benefited, emerging stronger and wiser from those events. Incidentally, the leaders of the revolt - for the most part they now hold right-wing views - work in the press, on TV and in advertising and are doing very well.

Today France is not going through a revolutionary age, Debray told me. That should be clear. All that the left can do is to seek power by conventional, parliamentary means. I would perhaps like a different version, but one has to proceed from realities. No one in France wants violence, even revolutionary violence, and that deals a mortal blow to any revolution. We are busy with our own problems....

Cuba, Bolivia, Chile

Debray attended the Ecole Normale Supérieure - a school for the elite. He studied Marxism and existentialism. The war in Algeria played a special role in shaping his outlook. Later he was to describe it as a bleeding wound, just as Vietnam was for Americans. When during his holidays in 1961 he flew to New York, then took another plane to Miami and from there went to Cuba, he probably never suspected that the trip would change his entire life. He offered the revolutionary government his services as a teacher and was well received. His left-wing views, acute mind and readiness to serve the revolution attracted the attention of Fidel Castro and Ché Guevara, whom he had the occasion to talk to at length. In 1966 he became professor of philosophy at the University of Havana. It was then also that he began writing his famous book "Revolution in the Revolution? Armed Struggle and Political Struggle in Latin America."

Debray believed that the leading role in a revolution belongs to intellectuals and students, that revolutions begin with a seat of armed struggle, that guerillas create a revolutionary situation, not the other way round, and that there's no need for a vanguard Marxist-Leninist party.

In March 1967, Debray met Ché Guevara in his Bolivian camp and spent six weeks with him. On April 20 Debray was captured by Bolivian soldiers seeking Ché Guevara. A thirty years' prison sentence awaited him. On learning that Guevara had been killed, Debray declared that he was ready to share the fate of the guerillas. He behaved with the utmost dignity and courageously accepted the sentence passed on him. But the regime in power was overthrown, and the new government released him. Chilean President Salvador Allende offered him political asylum.

In his essay "Problems of Revolutionary Strategy" Debray devotes much space to Chile. Even before the Popular Unity government came to power he had written that even Allende's victory at the polls would not lead to radical changes in the structure of the state apparatus, and neither the Chilean ruling class, nor the imperialist forces would be defeated by the people's action. He pointed to the "decisive influence of the Catholic Church, and the political hold of the ruling class on the big newspapers and all the mass propaganda media." Debray then described the confidence of Chilean Communists that a revolution could be won without an armed struggle as unfounded optimism. Those words were to be recalled by many when the Popular Unity government was overthrown as a result of a military coup.

In the 1970s Debray devoted himself entirely to his writing. He wrote at least a book a year - fiction and non-fiction in about equal proportions. Probably it was during those years that he actively sought or perhaps revised the raison d'être for his past life, his views on the revolutionary process and methods for the renovation of society.

In 1974 he became active in French political life and took part in François Mitterrand's election campaigns. In 1981 he started working in the Elysée Palace....

Neither paradise, nor hell

Debray was reluctant to speak about the past. He turned away frowning, and switched to a more familiar theme.

I asked about East-West relations.

He said that he hoped things were moving towards détente, and that confrontation could be replaced by competition. Ten years ago the anti-Soviet campaign was at its height. He named the reasons for this as GOULAG, the attitude to dissidents and Jewish emigration, the absence of political freedoms, and the invasion of Afghanistan. All that made the image of the Soviet Union very unattractive, and reaction and the right did not miss the chance to paint your country as a devil seeking to gain control over the whole world. The absence of contacts between private individuals played an extremely negative role, as it bred fear, dislike and mistrust.

The newspapers, radio and TV did a great deal to create a negative image of the Soviet Union. To a certain extent this is explained by elementary circumstances that you underestimate. A French journalist invariably finds it easier to cross the Atlantic than to travel to the Soviet Union, since in your country there are certain restrictions that make obtaining information impossible. That gives rise to irritation. You wanted foreign journalists to write about you in a certain vein, and they write in an entirely different one.

And in France it is hard to obtain reliable information about the Soviet Union.

Surely not for a presidential adviser, I said.

Debray explained that he did not mean political information, but an understanding of the real life of the Soviet people. He added that he lives in the vicinity of the Cosmos cinema, where Soviet films are shown all the time and often sees them. In his view it's easier for the Soviet people to learn about life in France than for the French to learn about life in the Soviet Union. Yours, he said, is a more closed society. While ours is more like a stage production - not on the American scale, but it is coming close to it. The attitude towards you has begun to change since Gorbachev came.

For many years you sought to create the impression that your country is a paradise on earth, and those of your opponents - hell. Neither version is believed. People have to see that the Soviet Union is like any other country, with its own problems. You have to show your country, we have to discover it, casting propaganda aside and leaving only information.

Frankly speaking, Debray told me, I should like to be in your place. You have so much to do, he added unexpectedly, and his voice sounded young again, like the Debray of old.

●

A block away from the Elysée Palace I went into the Metro. At every turn in the long corridors along which I wandered not knowing the way properly, I met the poor; young people, not immigrants, but French young men who had sought refuge in Paris because of the crisis in the provinces. They say there is even worse to come. The elite system of education is producing a generation that has no chances of finding jobs because they cannot cope with the new technologies. Another "lost generation"? Fuel... In one station a municipal worker in green uniform was tearing down old posters, layer by layer, making room for new ones - for the new election campaign that is to start shortly. For a second one glimpsed the politicians of yesterday and the day before, who will either disappear for ever or regain their place in history.

LEONID MLECHIN

Paris - Moscow

For peace and unity

Dr PAUL WEINZWEIG, Canadian businessman

In their lives, people search for many things - for wealth, fame, romance, security, and so on... Often they discover their treasure but soon find it wanting and rush off in search of something more precious. Yet few understand the rules of desire or the true value of life's gifts. The ancient story of the genie who suddenly appears and grants any wish is a touchstone for the human spirit. Perhaps the most valuable treasure of all is the "future" - and the means for its discovery lie principally in the imagination and in the heart. Recently, a genie offered me my wish.

Last spring, our company, Social Engineering Associates, headed by my wife, Paulina, and myself, was approached by our friend Dr Dmitry Shparo to help organize and finance the Canadian part of the Soviet-Canadian Transpolar Ski Expedition. Several reasons lay behind the request. We had already established a good working relationship with Soviet embassy officials and my wife, Paulina, speaks perfect Russian. An evening of native drumming and singing shared with Soviet ski team members at an Indian Friendship Centre in Ottawa had effectively demonstrated a spiritual kinship and emotional warmth which subsequent days and weeks together in Canada and the Soviet Union were only to confirm and strengthen.

Ten Days in Moscow

In mid-September, Paulina and I flew to Moscow to officially sign the expedition agreement with Sputnik - the International Youth Travel Bureau of the U.S.S.R. We also conducted a busy series of meetings with Soviet officials on a broad range of subjects to establish joint ventures in manufacturing, management training, trade and culture. We had positive meetings with Academician Georgi Arbatov and his colleagues of the Institute of the U.S.A. and Canada on our proposal to redeem Soviet debt from developing countries through a creative debt-to-equity conversion scheme which would not only improve Soviet export markets and imports of consumer goods and hard currency, but would also strengthen the economic infrastructures of the developing countries.

Our reception in Moscow was beautiful and the ten days there were productive beyond our expectations. Thanks, first of all, to the hospitality of Sputnik and to the gracious wizardry of Dmitry Shparo and his ski team who are as adept in the cold halls of bureaucracy as they are on the ice floes of the North Pole. We quickly came to understand the great importance which Soviet officials attach to the Soviet-Canadian Transpolar Expedition and the high esteem deservedly enjoyed by Shparo and his colleagues in the eyes of the Soviet people whose touching habit of laying flowers on the graves of their outstanding compatriots extends to their living heroes as well.

And what about our personal impressions of the great city of Moscow which was celebrating its 840th birthday? I saw an old and vital culture which had absorbed and synthesized the cultures of many other nations from East to West. We attended celebrations in the magnificent Kremlin theatre and were treated to a pageantry in time and space. One of the impressive qualities of the Russians is their taste for beauty and grandeur and this evening was no exception. Music, dances and costumes from the various republics showed the peoples and their histories in a warm and appealing light. Many of the performers were amateurs - from children to grandparents - and this gave a certain sincerity and informality to what was otherwise a professionally choreographed entertainment. The unfolding history reminded me of the great suffering endured over centuries by Russian people, of the military invasions from north and south and east and west, and of the courage and compassion which such experiences bring. The desire for peace on the part of the Soviet people is deeper and more profound than in many places on earth.

A skiing trip across the Pole

The Transpolar ski expedition, unique in history, is a gesture of peace through science, sport, good will and human heroism. A team of Soviet and Canadian skiers will set out in the beginning of March 1988, from the Severnaya Zemlya Islands in the U.S.S.R. and travel, via the North Pole, nearly 2,000 kilometres to Cape Columbia at the northern tip of Canada's Ellesmere Island. Aside from the many important scientific experiments in glaciology, physiology and geomagnetism, the expedition will show, in the words of leader Dmitry Shparo, that we are such close neighbours, we can walk from one house to another.

I have never met a finer group of people. Their intelligence, courage, good character and desire for friendship and understanding have already forged a bridge of brotherhood between our two countries. "In the shadow of the atomic bomb," Albert Einstein remarked, "it has become even more apparent that all men are, indeed, brothers." But in the shadow of history's wars and in the miasma of destructive propaganda, brotherhood, like peace, is a process that must be nurtured with courageous deeds as well as with positive thoughts and feelings.

The Soviet members of the expedition arrived in Canada to prepare for the trans-Arctic skiing trip, following joint practice sessions in the Tien-Shan and Trans-Ili Ala-Tau Mountains. Photo: Grame Magor, a Canadian, and Dmitry Shparo, the head of the expedition, relaxing after a rush across a tract of mountain country.
TASS photo

We have sought for so long to build the defences of peace through political and military means that we have forgotten the true foundations of peace which lie with culture - with consciousness, education, art, science, trade, tourism, values and attitudes. For many years, I have studied the philosophy and art of Nicholas Roerich, the great Russian artist, scientist and peacemaker. Roerich's call to peace through culture, which received so much worldwide attention in the 1920s and 1930s, has become more urgent than ever. Let us remember that many nations participated in this movement by signing protocols and treaties. President Roosevelt committed the United States to the "peace through culture" process by signing the Inter-American Treaty on the Roerich Pact in the White House in 1935 along with representatives from all the Latin American nations. "In opening this Pact," said President Roosevelt in an international broadcast, "to the adherence of the nations of the world, we are endeavouring to make of universal application one of the principles vital to the preservation of modern civilization. This treaty possesses a spiritual significance far deeper than the text of the instrument itself. Let us bring renewed allegiance to those high principles of international cooperation and helpfulness which, I feel assured, will be a great contribution to civilization by the Americas."

Travelling to the Soviet Union for the first time, I became aware that Roerich's ideas and artistic sensibilities grew naturally from the soil of Russian culture and history. I saw the beautiful churches and ancient legends which inspired his early art; I saw among the Soviet people the deep seriousness and responsibility toward life which I had come to admire and emulate in Roerich's life; and I felt the sentiments, the capacity for love and beauty, and the spiritual depth which Roerich manifested in his life's work. So, coming to Russia was like going home.

The "third wave" society

In search of the future, I saw a great desire among Soviet people to build a better future. And I saw, in the relationships between our two countries, a limitless opportunity to share our experience and human and material wealth to mutual advantage. "Perestroika" and "glasnost" are not empty words. Mr Gorbachev is an inspiring, talented and determined leader who will bring the Soviet Union into the 21st century as a technologically modern and efficient country with the best of its culture and character intact. When one appreciates the miracle of effort which shook the nation from its feudal past and built an industrial superpower out of the ashes of war and revolution in less than two generations, it is not difficult to believe that the Soviet Union will be able to create what Alvin Toffler calls a "third wave" society, in which individual freedom, creativity, decentralization and technical achievements will blend with social and environmental responsibility.

In search of the future, our greatest enemy is cynicism, our greatest hope and friend is action supported by intelligence and good will. The dynamism of Shparo and his team served us as a catalyst to open the door to a host of joint ventures in areas as diverse as youth travel, hovercraft manufacturing, book publishing and art exhibitions.

Canada is the perfect partner for the Soviet Union. Geographically situated between the two superpowers, Canada is the natural mediator and peacemaker. Canada is a technologically advanced nation with a free market economy balanced by socialist traditions of universal health care, unemployment insurance, old-age pensions and successful cooperatives from food to housing. Like the Soviet Union, we are rich in natural resources and represent a world-in-microcosm with our multicultural heritage. And of course there is the vast North, that ecologically delicate region whose future is so important to everyone. This is why our joint ski expedition is a truly international event.

To build upon the work of Nicholas Roerich, I founded a number of years ago the International Foundation for Peace Through Culture. The purpose of the foundation is to help the world - its nations and its individuals - achieve that balance and synthesis of culture which is the key to growth, prosperity and happiness.

Let me offer a personal example. I am a sociologist from an artistic family (my father is a composer, my mother a writer, and my brother a film producer and distributor). My wife, Paulina, is a civil engineer and both her parents were engineers. She is Russian. I am Canadian. Together we formed a company called Social Engineering Associates which integrates the various disciplines and provides both a holistic and cross-cultural perspective to problem solving in every aspect of technology, culture, trade and society. We are a business with a serious cultural and social purpose.

Such seriousness is expressed in a proposal for building peace in the 21st century which was sent recently to Mr Gorbachev by our International Foundation for Peace Through Culture. Called International Cities, the proposal calls for the Soviet Union and Canada to inaugurate an international network of global centres of culture devoted to the arts, technical and social problem solving, education, trade, tourism and international newscasting. The proposal is based upon the work of Nicholas Roerich but adapted to the needs of the contemporary world.

As we search for the future, we shall see that Dmitry Shparo's vast sense of neighbourliness must become the personal sensibility of all caring people. The growing interdependence of our shrinking, troubled world demands that our thoughts and actions become global and integrative.

It is this broad highway to the future which distinguishes the confident leadership of Mikhail Gorbachev, whose good-natured intelligence, simplicity and sincerity have touched the hearts and fired the imaginations of men, women and children everywhere who seek, with the people of the Soviet Union, a just world, a loving world, a peaceful world. In the words of Nicholas Roerich: "All symbols and tablets of humanity contain one hieroglyph, the sacred prayer - Peace and Unity."

Ottawa

Preserving our national heritage

It is perhaps too early to speak of any notable achievements on the part of this new public organization, for the Soviet Culture Fund is at an early stage in its existence. The very fact that it has been set up, however, and the overall direction of its work so far, compel one to take a fresh look at a whole range of established notions and long-standing stereotypes of what has come to be known as the "culture." Abandoning stereotypes is surely a first step towards renewal.

It was on that note that our correspondent began her conversation with two Presidium members of the Fund - VALENTIN FALIN, Chairman of the board of the Novosty Press Agency, and SAVELY YAMSHCHIKOV, the well-known art critic and restorer.

N.T. Over the first year of its existence, the Culture Fund has received about three thousand letters. Most of them, and this does not appear to be a coincidence, contain requests that some problem or other be dealt with, and are addressed to the Fund as if it were an ultimate body of power. But there exist the Ministry of Culture, the State Committee for Publishing, Printing and the Book Trade, the State Committees of Cinematography and Concerts, and others. Would it not be reasonable to concentrate on improving the operation of these bodies responsible for culture, rather than add one more to them? In other words, what in your view made it necessary to set up the Soviet Culture Fund?

Falin. The setting up of the Fund was not an attempt to relieve the government of any of its responsibilities. Nor was it an attempt to improve the operation of the relevant government bodies, although perhaps there was room for improvement. The Fund was not formed to reject all that had been done previously in the sphere of culture. It was not a vote of no confidence in those to whom the government had assigned the job of dealing with culture professionally. The idea of setting up the Soviet Culture Fund can only readily be understood in the context of the truly profound qualitative change in our society, in the context of democratization in real terms that makes a common national cause close to the hearts of each one of us. It would be naive to suppose - and it is wonderful that the appropriate conclusions have been drawn - that one can administer cultural life according to a set of rules or that it can be divided up between government departments. Culture can be preserved and multiplied by the whole of society, and that active part of it which is prepared to involve itself in preserving and increasing the spiritual and intellectual wealth that makes a nation. That can be achieved only if the individual is not eclipsed by symbols of culture such as the word, music, dance, or the visual arts, and given that culture has a humanitarian content.

It is therefore in bringing together the enthusiasm of the people and the potential of the government, rather than in bringing them into confrontation with each other, that the Soviet Culture Fund sees its principal purpose.

N.T. The charter of the Soviet Culture Fund defines it as a body of public self-government. Self-government and government are clearly two very different things. Could it be that, far from stimulating cultural growth, the idea of acting in conjunction with the state cultural bodies is really a compromise, a social half-measure, or even a dubious hybrid capable only of exacerbating the conflicts that have long existed in that sphere? One relevant example is the experience of cooperation between the recently formed Union of Theatre Actors and Directors and the appropriate government bodies, where a desire to revive truly creative criteria, on the one hand, appears to be in conflict with, on the other, the authority to give the "go ahead," or impose a veto.

Falin. I cannot accept that point of view, as I do not see the makings of a conflict in the idea of partnership, and partnership is exactly what we are discussing. There is a job for everyone, the Culture Fund, the creative unions, and the Ministry of Culture. These institutions have many duties and obligations as they go about their business, but they must not regard each other as contenders for some prerogative, but rather treat each other as allies. Mutual understanding and keeping the common overall objective in view exclude friction and conflicts.

Yamshchikov. I would like to add that what we need is a clearer definition of the spheres of influence. The purpose of the Fund is to blaze new trails. It does not function on the basis of state planning or financing, its motive force arises from the real cultural needs of the people, and if the Fund begins to disregard them or, on the contrary, tries to foist something on the cultural sphere, the people will not give their financial backing to ideas that appear stillborn to them.

I have with me here a list of donations to finance various projects, and it is a very interesting document. One can see what people choose themselves and what is dear to them. Here is how the million rubles in donations at the disposal of the Fund today is distributed: the bulk of contributions has been for a monument to Vasily Tyorkin, the much-loved hero of Alexander Tvardovsky's poem. People have been giving us their savings to found museums to commemorate cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin, actor, singer and song writer Vladimir Vysotsky, poets Anna Akhmatova, Marina Tsvetayeva, Boris Pasternak, Velimir Khlebnikov, and the outstanding army commander Georgi Zhukov. We have received donations to help preserve the site of the Battle of Borodino and restore the Pushkin memorials in Vyazemy and Zakharovo, near Moscow.

N.T. The idea of setting up memorials in Vyazemy and Zakharovo, where Alexander Pushkin spent his childhood, was voiced a long time ago, and if I am not mistaken, there has been little progress here until very recently. The situation used to be much the same with regard to a museum of private collections, a collectors' club and many other social initiatives that for years could not be implemented and which, despite the period of stagnation, have refused to lie down. Also in this category are fringe associations of young people which formerly escaped the attention of government bodies respon-

sible for culture. Surely the Fund should take a stand with respect to unofficial initiative.

Yamshchikov. Its stand on the issue is constructive. A bank of public initiatives has been set up, with people and creative associations contributing to it. Many of these ideas are being implemented. For instance, the tradition of Diaghilev's famous Russian Seasons will be revived, along with folk crafts, studies in folklore and its promotion, and the movement of local history enthusiasts, which has all but run out of steam. You spoke of collectors' attempts to unite. Well, several months ago a collectors' club was formed and

Baron Eduard von Falz-Fein hands over the portrait of Prince Potemkin as a gift to the Soviet Culture Fund.
Photo by V. Akhlomov (TASS)

I was elected president. That came as something of a surprise to me, but probably it was a tribute to my work in organizing various exhibitions. At first we thought of setting up a club of Moscow's collectors only, but very soon collectors from Leningrad and Minsk contacted us and our colleagues abroad, Nikita Lobanov-Rostovsky in London, Alexandre Polonski in Paris, and Georgios Kostaki in Greece, joined the initiative. Aware of the problems in dealing with collectors, we feared that a club of this kind would be a burden for the Fund, but it all worked out fine. No sooner had the club been formed - we had not yet even printed membership cards - than collectors began opening exhibitions. Among them was the exhibition of the young Russian artists of the early 1910s (Larionov, Goncharov, Kandinsky, Malevich and Chagall), the exhibition of the image of the Russian woman in art, from icons to works that appeared in the 1930s, the exhibition of the sights of Moscow and the Moscow area (engravings, lithographs and etchings from the collection of Pyotr Romanov), the exhibition of folk Russian pottery, and the exhibition of agitprop porcelain, painting, drawing, stage sets, design and posters of 1917-27.

The Soviet Culture Fund has been greatly encouraged by the response from Russians living abroad and foreign collectors. Baron Eduard von Falz-Fein of Liechtenstein has donated a portrait of Prince Potemkin by an unknown painter, a bas-relief of his ancestor Falz-Fein who founded the Askania Nova wildlife reserve, and unique documents shedding light on the causes of the death of the Emperor Alexander I. The well-known French art critic and collector André Nakov has donated stage sets designs. Quite recently Baron Thyssen-Bornemisza presented the Fund with Alessandro Magnasco's painting "Landscape with Figures," which is now displayed in the State Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts.

We have launched many interesting projects. An exhibition of the Russian avant-garde from private collections will be shown in this country and in the West. Next spring it will go to Sweden, Finland, and Denmark. A unique exhibition of Russian icons of the 14-17th centuries will be shown in this country and abroad. Most of the works of art concerned have never previously been publicly exhibited.

N.T. How much can be done where good ideas are unimpeded by red tape!

Yamshchikov. The situation is not perfect, really. The trouble is that every new move by the Culture Fund creates unprecedented legal and financial situations and runs up against the powerful system of prohibitions that has long been out of date. That system is what the ropes of the Lilliputians were to Gulliver, and I very much hope that we will be able to cut the red tape.

N.T. Are there firm grounds for hoping that the "artistic bureaucracy" will voluntarily step aside? I have in mind mass produced culture. Can one really hope that all those songs with invariably optimistic messages will go off the air spontaneously, and that poker-faced performers singing marches will disappear, along with a whole host of other images projected by "official art"? Perhaps it might be a good idea if we were to identify every instance of bureaucratic culture that has forced the living human spirit into the "unofficial fringe" and, having shattered the foundations of the hierarchy of true values, has led us to what Alexander Blok warned us against: a "mental blight" and the "assassination of taste"....

Falin. During the period of stagnation timeserving very often prevailed over fundamental values. We still have no foolproof formulas for communicating with culture, identifying genuine art as opposed to surrender to the tastes of the day, or finding integrity in diversity. A restructuring of consciousness is under way here too. The stereotypes of pseudo-art must be smashed, and more importantly, we must reach for the mechanism that generates them. We know of lofty examples of how culture should be treated. I mean Lenin. He may have felt that he personally could not accept one work of art or artistic trend or other, but he never tried to insist that it be viewed according to the dictates of his taste. Nor did he try to make the fate of a work of art dependent on personal perceptions. According to Lenin, the strategy of the evolution of socialist culture must pursue humanitarian objectives above all, and that is the sole rule that may not be disobeyed. If that approach had been adopted, a depersonalization of culture would not have appeared.

N.T. Regrettably, it did appear over some periods of our history when the monuments of the past were neglected....

Falin. I would not put too much emphasis on the "destructive zeal" of the 1920s and 1930s. It is enough to recall the letter the poet and dramatist Alexei Tolstoy sent Alexander II to protest against the demolition of cultural monuments by the official church. Paradoxically, the zealous advocates of the Orthodox faith did more damage to old Russian painting and architecture than anyone before or since. How many masterpieces had perished at their hands by the beginning of the 20th century! It is sufficient to recall the fate of the Cathedral of the Assumption in Zvenigorod, or Vladimir Cathedral.

N.T. There unfortunately are ways of destroying culture other than physical demolition. The fundamental laws of art and criteria based upon them are sometimes violated, giving rise to an orgy of arrangements, face-lifting and faking of folk and classical art. Here is an example. What is marketed as the "Russian folk choir" has no right to that name. It is no more than a base variety of jerking-tear pop culture stomping on the stage.

Falin. The onslaught of pop culture is in large measure a malaise of contemporary civilization. It has not spared any national culture. Look what damage has been done by Americanization to "the sacred stones of Europe," to use Fyodor Dostoyevsky's coinage. We have managed to preserve the classical schools, the very foundation of culture, better than other nations.

N.T. That would seem to be a poor consolation, and besides, we have a speci-

fics of our own. At any rate, it would appear that the Soviet Culture Fund, from which we have strayed in our discussion, should draw up a concept of exploring and preserving the cultural heritage. It must arrive at a methodology of some kind. After all, Goethe's classic formula "that which you inherit from your fathers you must earn in order to possess," has always been interpreted broadly in Russian translations.

Yamshchikov. The watchword of the Soviet Culture Fund is to "preserve, explore, and multiply." Our goal is to keep the fire burning, encourage people aspiring to culture, and awaken in young people an interest in all that is our own, in the monuments of history and culture in our homeland, lest their minds be diverted to something less worthy. It is our job to make sure that an esthetic and ethical frame of reference - these "two sides of the same lever" as Leo Tolstoy taught us - evolves in the individual from childhood. A sense that one is in communion with the culture and spiritual imperatives of one's people must be at the heart of it all. We know full well how difficult that task is. We must keep the spirit of culture alive and not just try to preserve the stones and walls where it resides. We know that so far we have not succeeded in getting large numbers of people interested and that few young people come to our exhibitions, especially when they are organized without any sensationalism. We realize that it is impossible to overcome overnight what has been an evil of our upbringing for years, and, indeed, a dominant feature. But we are optimistic and feel that people will come to see our clay penny whistles, and that perhaps the heart of a young mother will respond to their sound, and she would stop to think: surely a toy like that, crafted in Ryazan or Tula, is just what her child must have, because it was made by someone who carried the serenity of childhood to old age, someone whose vision of the world is unsullied. It is not that we want young parents to go in en masse for antique toys for their children. We want them to evolve what can rightly be called ideals.

Falin. As far as the Culture Fund's part in preserving our cultural heritage is concerned, surely one of the most important tasks here is to fight pseudo-culture, pseudo-Russian or pseudo-Ukrainian styles and so on. The Fund is yet to evolve a long-term strategy. At this stage we must identify what is most important. And that is not to lose sight of the individual as we go about looking for artefacts and arranging ventures that attract public interest. Regrettably, we are very often interested in the human being in art and culture after he or she has become a phenomenon, and for as long as that phenomenon can be utilized. That is something we must avoid in the spiritual and intellectual sphere.

Culture must be rid of bookkeeping, whereby average indices are computed for the sake of reports, and this can be done through **education,** which is one of the most important functions of the Culture Fund.

N.T. Are you talking of the problem of "the metropolis and the province"? In the past cultural life in the provinces was as intense as it was in the capital....

Falin. I am against idealizing the past. In the past the provinces were remote from the principal avenues of cultural progress. True, Lomonosov, Repin, and Chekhov came from the provinces, but how many talents vanished there without a trace! It is clearly impossible to make the cultural riches of the capital available to hundreds of small towns, but we can give people the opportunity to come acquainted with these riches: to buy a good book, see a good film, and listen to a concert by talented guest musicians. Recently Svyatoslav Richter went on a nationwide tour. He played in all parts of Russia in tiny clubs and he played all kinds of pianos, even those which, it seemed, no great musician would play. Our artists and musicians must not be out of touch with the people of whom they are a part.

It would be unreasonable to suppose that the government can shoulder full responsibility for making the cultural heritage available to the people at large. That is everyone's duty. The Culture Fund has no need to set up a cumbersome and costly bureaucratic machine. It came into being to **arouse** popular interest in the arts and alert society to signs of hope and danger in equal measure.

N.T. Do you believe there is a danger that the Fund will be caught up in red tape?

Falin. In theory such a danger exists, but in practice it all depends on the people.

N.T. It may very well be that it all also depends on the stand taken by those who work for the Fund on one of the "eternal" problems of our culture. I mean the long-running debate between the "educators of the ignorant masses" and their opponents, such as Dostoyevsky, who advised them to begin by learning from the people. After all, the philosophy adopted by the cultural authorities on whom the Fund's work in large measure depends can either strengthen or weaken the democratic position of the Fund.

Falin. One's personal culture cannot be assessed in terms of one's educational level or erudition. One may be born with the hallmarks of a cultured individual in one's attitude to the world around, the people around, to one's parents and in the way he reacts to the opinions and tastes of others. Culture presupposes tolerance. In general the notion of culture has yet to be defined in clearer terms in the context of today to enable us to arrive at the real criteria.

N.T. It is hard to define the meaning of the term. We do not find the word "culture" in Pushkin's vocabulary. It was slow in gaining currency in later periods. At the turn of the century a Pushkin scholar complained that the term "culture" was applied in his day to breeding chickens. There are, I believe, some three hundred definitions of culture now - a phantom of the 20th century - and we now have another mystery on our hands, the Culture Fund....

Falin. It is clear at any rate that one cannot assess culture on a balance sheet, for the rules of addition and substraction do not apply here. Culture is an attitude to life and an ability to rise above selfish needs. Culture is a repository of values that make us human beings distinct from all other living things. It makes us subjects rather than objects.

Going back to the start of our conversation, I would like to emphasize the need to treat creativity with the utmost care. A generalization of creative experience will no doubt lead to a more statesmanlike attitude to culture in order to exclude situations of the kind where someone might feel alienated in our society because some official or other says he's doing it all wrong. Those who have embarked on the tortuous path of serving culture and the arts must be shown total respect, because the philistine aberration that being an artist "ain't really working" is still rampant. Some people do not realize how much blood, sweat and tears go into a ten-minute performance by a ballerina, violinist, pianist or singer, or how much self-discipline an artist needs. We are of course talking of real rather than fake art.

Society must take care of its moral health by giving those who create cultural assets their due. The Soviet Culture Fund can and must exercise authority here because it is less susceptible to pressing concerns of the day and because it is not involved in the clash of group interests. In other words, the Fund can be altruistic. The very fact that the Fund was formed indicates that the problems of culture have assumed another dimension and that society is capable of showing concern for those who generate culture and for all that makes culture up.

I am convinced that investment in culture is the best possible investment. As soon as this is realized fully few problems will remain unresolved.

Interviewer EKATERINA KOZHUKHOVA

The Menuhin phenomenon

IGOR OISTRAKH

Yehudi Menuhin, the famous British violinist, has given concert in Moscow in memory of David Oistrakh.

Yehudi Menuhin first came to our country 42 years ago. It was an unusual visit. With World War II just over, Yehudi decided to visit the European countries that had suffered from nazi occupation. Photographs taken at the time show him disembarking from the plane in an army jacket. He did not bring a violin of his own, but hired a magnificent Guarnieri from Hill's before coming to the Soviet Union. My father met him at the aiport, and the two of them drew up the schedule of future performances there and then - not a year in advance, as is the case now. Everything - the pieces to be played, the venues and the dates - was decided upon straight after Menuhin stepped onto the tarmac. Yehudi Menuhin offered to perform Bach's Double Concerto with my father. Later he played the Concerto with me.

Father came home from the airport radiant with joy. "What a man!" he exclaimed. "It felt like a long-awaited happy reunion with a brother." That was how they made each other's acquaintance which later developed into an amazing creative alliance and a lasting friendship. Few colleagues feel towards one another as they did. Such a relationship is rare among performers. Most musicians of their calibre are jealous of each other and not quite sincere in their relations, although they are all smiles and exchange pleasantries when seen together in public. In this case, it was different.

A mere 14 then, I went to violin classes but wasn't quite sure what I wanted to be. Hearing Menuhin play in Moscow in 1945, and getting to know him personally, largely decided my fate. The amazing creative impulse which he generated and which he imparted to many, myself included, compelled me to treat classical composition in a new and more profound way, and inspired me to do serious work. The Victory Year of 1945 was marked by two memorable events: Menuhin's first postwar guest tour and the subsequent visit to the U.S.S.R. of his teacher Georges Enescu. The memories of these events remain fresh for me because for a musician they are unforgettable.

Later, Yehudi Menuhin and my father played a lot together - in British cities, in Bucharest, at the Pablo Casals Festival in the French town of Prades, at a United Nations gala concert in New York.... In 1963 the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra and myself gave a concert in London's Albert Hall, one of the world's largest concert halls, seating about 8,000. The conductor was Yehudi Menuhin himself. It was the first time I had seen him in this capacity, although he had taken up conducting in the forties.

This man is hard to describe and still harder to sum up: his talent is too varied. He has had great success in his almost 70-year-long career: now 71, he has been scintillating on the music scene since the age of four, when he was referred to as a "child prodigy." This phrase is often used ironically because too many promising children never fulfil their promise. Yehudi Menuhin's gift is nothing short of miraculous.

His repertoire is vast. He plays virtually all the pieces composed expressly for the violin. Notably, Yehudi Menuhin was one of the first and greatest interpreters of the work of the Hungarian composer Bela Bartok. Now Bartok's talent is admired by the whole musical world. But when Menuhin first came here 42 years ago, we knew next to nothing about Bartok. We were not alone in our ignorance. Even in Hungary, the composer's homeland, it was quite some time before his music won recognition. Based on a profound analysis of folklore, his music sounded too complex. But for those who have found their way into his world, Bartok's works are a joy. Menuhin did more than just awaken the public to Bartok's music, he was a personal friend of the composer's and played his violin concertos in his presence. When I hear Menuhin play Bartok, I feel I am hearing Bartok himself.

...My father was for years the foremost performer of outstanding works by Soviet composers. Shostakovich and Prokofiev dedicated concertos to him. Menuhin showed keen interest in Soviet music (probably owing to the fact that his parents had come from Russia). He always asked father to send him the scores after firstnight performances, and was one of the West's first musicians to perform works by Shostakovich and Prokofiev.

I have never taken much interest in his politics, but I am sure that there too, he is after peace and the common good. Therefore, he is eager to be of help to all.

His warm-heartedness is truly remarkable. After a rehearsal with my son Valery and myself, he suddenly told me that my manner was very much like my father's, and that he could hear his voice in the sounds of the old Stradivari I played. And added: "It's nice playing with you. It makes me feel I've just stepped into your father's place."

Recorded by I. LAGUNINA

Yehudi Menuhin playing a trio with Igor Oistrakh and Valery Oistrakh.
Photo by A. Ratnikov

"I am growing old slowly..."

Alberto Moravia is 80

"The Indifferent" ("Gei indifferenti") is the title of the first novel of Alberto Pincherle, the son of a Rome architect, known today by his pen name Alberto Moravia. In the nearly 60 years since then he has published fifty novels and collections of stories.

The road to fame was not an easy one. Moravia wrote his first novels and stories in the oppressive years of fascism. Minculpop, as the fascist Ministry of Popular Culture was called, banned a reprinting of "The Indifferent," despite the novel's tremendous success. In 1941 his anti-fascist novel "The Masquerade" was confiscated and banned while Moravia himself was "expelled" from literature.

Moravia assumed the mysterious pen name "Pseudo." His psychological tale "Agostino" was also banned, and published clandestinely. During the nazi occupation Moravia was compelled to hide in the mountains near Fondi, where he wrote anti-fascist satirical stories collected under the general title "The Epidemic" (1944).

In his native city of Rome, newly liberated from the fascists, Moravia published a new book, "Hope, or Christianity and Communism," which drew favourable comment from Palmiro Togliatti. New problems arose in the postwar years. Moravia's books were banned by the Vatican.

Today all that is past. Moravia's work has won the recognition of the reading public. "Woman of Rome," "Le Ciociara" and "Roman Tales" have been translated into dozens of languages. "Alberto Moravia is a young man. He is close upon fifty. We can expect great books of him," the Soviet novelist Ilya Ehrenburg wrote in the preface to the Russian edition of Moravia's stories in 1956. As a writer, Moravia is today as young as he was three decades ago, producing ever new works.

"I'm growing old slowly because I'm an artist. My feelings have not yet grown cold," he once said. For many years he has been active in Italian cultural and public life. The Italians have always responded to the intellectual energy he emanates, his wisdom and the psychological effect of his writings.

Moravia's activities are not confined to Italy. He is a member of the European Parliament and travels a great deal. Only last year he visited the Soviet Union and China, France and West Germany, Zimbabwe, Morocco and Ethiopia.

When Moravia visited Moscow in the summer of 1979, I recorded a conversation with him. "Every day," he said then, "I spend two to three hours at my typewriter, working on a new book and preparing my weekly articles: 'European Diary' in the newspaper Corriere della Sera, and 'Cinema' in the magazine L'Espresso. The length of each article is five to six typewritten pages, but I type up to fifty pages. In my spare time I walk, meet with friends, and read for about two hours a day, but not more. I almost never watch televison but go to cinema every night. (Alberto Moravia has been writing his regular article "Cinema" since 1957, and has reviewed 2,000 films in the past thirty years). I don't work while travelling. You see, I don't go to other countries as a tourist. In Africa, for instance, I sleep in a tent, sometimes in a car, and, of course, it's impossible to write in such conditions."

Recently I had a telephone conversation with Moravia on the eve of his 80th birthday. He spoke from his flat on the Vittoria embankment in Rome. After wishing him many happy returns, I put several questions to him.

N.T.: How have Russian and Soviet literature influenced you?

Moravia: It was with admiration that I discovered the works of the great classics of Russian literature. Among my favourite writers I would name Gogol, Dostoyevsky and Bulgakov.

N.T.: What are you working on now?

Moravia: I've just completed a big novel and am putting the final touches to it. The book is to appear next spring.

N.T.: What will the title of your new novel be?

Moravia: Le ripetizione (Repetition).

N.T.: On behalf of New Times readers, I would like to congratulate you on completing your eighth decade and wish you every success in your future novels and travels.

Moravia: Why call it a decade? Let's make it 79+1. But, in any case, thank you for your kind words. I wish you success in your perestroika. I've read and heard a lot about it.

ALEXEI BUKALOV

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